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SELECT WORKS

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INSTITUTES OF THEOLOGY,

WITH

PRELECTIONS ON HILL'S LECTURES IN DIVINITY,

AND FOUR ADDRESSES DELIVERED IN THE
NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

BY THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. LL.D.

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INSTITUTES OF THEOLOGY.

INTRODUCTION.

In his first delivered Course of Theological Lectures, after treating of Natural Theology and the Evidences of Christianity, Dr. Chalmers entered upon the subject of the Character and Constitution of the Godhead. At the close, however, of his discussion of the doctrine of the Trinity, he declared it to be his purpose to depart from that order of topics which writers on systematic divinity had so generally pursued—an order which he himself had so far tested, and with which he had been disappointed—and to follow another in its stead, of whose superiority he became afterwards growingly convinced, and which he finally adopted, when, transcribing his lectures for the press, he moulded them into the form in which they are now presented to the public. As the most suitable introduction to the present volume, there is inserted here the explanation and defence of his relinquishment of the old method and adoption of the new, as given to his students at the time of the change, in a Lecture entitled—

ON THE RIGHT ORDER OF A THEOLOGICAL COURSE.

I am tempted to address you upon this subject, because the suspicion which I ventured to express at the commencement of

the session, on the common arrangements of our science, has of late obtained what I feel to be an experimental verification. You may recollect the mention I made some considerable time ago, of two different orders in which the lessons of the Christian theology might be delivered, and the principle of each of them respectively.* The one proceeds chronologically in the order of the Divine administration, beginning with the constitution of the Godhead, and proceeding onward through the successive footsteps of a history which commences with the original purposes of the uncreated mind, and terminates in the consummation of all things. The other proceeds chronologically in the natural order of human inquiry, beginning therefore with the darkness and the probabilities and the wants of natural theology, and after having ascertained the Scripture to be a real communication from heaven to earth, seeking first after those announcements that are most directly fitted to relieve the distress and to meet the difficulties of nature. It is thus that in entering upon the record the first thing that would naturally attract the notice, is the confirmation which it lends to the apprehensions and the anxieties of nature respecting the fearful extent both of man's depravity and of his danger; whence we should proceed to a consideration of the offered remedy; whence to the means by which that remedy is appropriated; whence to its operation both in reconciling God to man, and regenerating man in the likeness of God; whence to the progressive holiness of the life ripening and maturing, under the influence of the truths of Christianity, for the exercises and joys of a blissful eternity; whence to death and judgment, and the respective destinies of those who have embraced the gospel of Jesus Christ and those who have rejected it. You will perceive that, under these two distinct arrangements, the topics follow each other in

* See the Preface to the fifth volume of Dr. Chalmers's "Select Works."

a very different order of succession. We all along were suspicious of the first, though it be the very order of almost all the confessions and catechisms of Europe, and of the great majority of our authors, whether in the controversial or the systematic theology. Yet with all these authorities on its side, we have ever distrusted the first, and can now say that our entire, our decided preference, is for the second.

You will observe that there is much the same difference between these two methods as there is between the synthetic and the analytic processes in the exposition of any other science. By the synthetic, you begin, as in geometry, with the elementary principles, and out of these you compound the ultimate doctrines or conclusions of the science. By the analytic, you begin with the objects or the phenomena which first solicit your regards, and these by comparison and abstraction you are enabled to resolve into their principles. It is evident that the synthetic treatment demands a full and thorough and confident acquaintance with the subject-matter to which it is applied, and withal a clear and correct notion of the primitive elements that enter into the investigation, lest in the stream of ratiocination downward some original flaw in the premises shall be found to vitiate every deduction that may have issued from an infected fountainhead. The analytic, again, is more applicable to a subject where, instead of having the principles to set out with, you have the principles to seek, and so beginning with the phenomena that are most palpable or nearest at hand, you, by a reverse process, end where the other begins. This latter mode is surely the fitter for a science beset on either side with mysteries unfathomable—a science all whose light breaks in upon us by partial and imperfect disclosures, and where we vainly try to find a ligament or connecting principle between one ascertained truth and another. With such a science we

should feel inclined to proceed *modo indagandi* rather than *modo demonstrandi.* And theology we hold to be pre-eminently such a science—a science whose initial elements we cannot pluck from the dark recesses of the eternity that is past, and whose ultimate conclusions we cannot follow to the like dark and distant recesses of the eternity before us, and which we can therefore only explore to the confines of the light that has been made to shine around us. There it is our duty to stop, intruding not into the things which we have not seen, and to wait in humble expectancy for the day of a larger and a brighter manifestation.

Now we cannot but think it a violation of this principle, that so early a place should be given to the doctrine of the Trinity in the common expositions of theology. It seems to have been a very general conception that this was the way to begin at the beginning; or, in other words, after having by a transcendental flight assumed our station at the top of the ladder, to move through the series of its descending steps instead of climbing upward from the bottom of it. Our movement, we think, should be in the last direction. We should feel our way upward, and not, as if already in possession of the summit, march with a look of command and an air of demonstrative certainty to the subordinate and dependent places which are beneath us. We greatly fear that a wrong commencement and a wrong direction may have infected with a certain presumptuous and *a priori* spirit the whole of our theology, and that we address ourselves to its high investigations more with the conscious mastery of one who, as from an eminence, eyes far and wide the prospect that is arouud him, than in the attitude of humble inquirers into the word of God.

This consideration is greatly strengthened by the relation in which the Natural stands to the Christian theology. It is wrong

to say of the one that it is the basis of the other; but certain it is, that under the promptings of the one we feel our way to the other. We think that there is enough of light in the natural conscience to awaken the sense of guilt, and to suggest the moral, to all appearance the impracticable difficulty which stands in the way of the sinner's acceptance with God. This is the great difficulty in which Natural Theology leaves us, and this is the very difficulty which Christianity takes up and relieves at the very outset of its proposals to the world. This I hold to be the great place of junction between the Natural and the Christian Theology, and we just follow in a continuous path when we step over from the difficulty in which the one lands us to the counterpart solution which the other offers us, from the cry of distress emitted by nature to the response wherewith that cry is appeased in the gospel of Jesus Christ. In other words, it is only now that we have come in sight of the place at which Natural Theology breaks off, and to the place from which the Christian Theology takes up the inquirer, and carries him forward along the line of her revelations, meeting him first with the disclosure of the way of his acceptance, and thence passing on with other doctrines and disclosures that stand related to the still higher object of his practical education for the joys and the exercises of heaven. Between the Natural and the Christian Theology there behoved to be interposed our inquiry into the credentials of the Bible; but between the last and greatest desideratum of the Natural, and the counterpart doctrine of the Christian Theology, there ought not to have been interposed the doctrine of the Trinity.

You will remember, that at the commencement of our Natural Theology, I first conceived the lowest possible state of notion or belief on the subject of a God, and then tried to demonstrate that even here there were certain religious imaginations or

thoughts, to which there were certain religious duties that corresponded. There is thus an ample principle of inquiry at the very outset, under which one might conceive all the argumentations and surmises of the Natural Theology to be gone through, till we have arrived at the utmost conjectures or discoveries which it is capable of making. But when we have reached thus far, instead of being landed in a state of satisfaction and repose, we find ourselves in the midst of heavy and unresolved difficulties, which create an unsated appetency for more of light and information than nature can supply. Now, I like, when entering on the subject-matter of Christianity, to take up first with those informations which nature most needs, and which nature, when morally awakened to a sense of her necessities, is most desirous of. I like thus to connect the interrogations of the Natural with the responses of the Christian Theology; and that the science, instead of being described in the order of the history of God, beginning therefore with the constitution, and proceeding onward to the purposes and the acts and the dispensations, in chronological series, of the uncreated mind, should be described rather in the order of the history of man, beginning with the alienation and darkness of his moral nature, and proceeding onward through those truths, which, acting successively upon him, introduce him to reconciliation with his Maker, and advance him to the condition of a blissful eternity. I am satisfied that this less ambitious way of it is better suited to the real state of the science, and that much of the intolerance and much of the unwarrantable dogmatism of our systematic theology is owing to the synthetic style of our demonstrations. We prefer a surer though an humbler pathway; and one of its principal charms is, that the order of our theoretical will thus be made to quadrate with the order of our practical Christianity. Our first doctrines will be those which meet the anxieties of

the spirit in quest of peace with God. The second, those which guide the disciple's way along the progressive holiness that qualifies him for the pleasures and the companionships of Paradise. And the third, those higher and transcendental themes which sublime the contemplation both of the saint and of the scholar, and shed a certain mystic glory over the whole system of Christianity—themes of which Scripture hath given decisive information, though in respect of nature and principle they are above the grasp of every earthly understanding, and so singularly suited to exercise the faith and the wisdom of those who are satisfied to know all that the Bible tells of them, and to wait for their fuller revelation in heaven. The doctrine of the Trinity, we apprehend, and more especially when made the subject of a critical or scientific treatment, belongs not to the first but to the last of these divisions.

For a far ulterior, perhaps even an ultimate topic in the subject-matter of Christianity, I cannot conceive a fitter doctrine than the Trinity, as a sort of high and concluding exercise in the science. There is such clear and resistless scriptural evidence in behalf of the separate propositions, and at the same time something so impracticable to reason in the attempt to reconcile them, that I know of no subject on which the soundness of one's Christian philosophy is brought more decisively to the test. It requires the function of a much finer discernment than belongs unfortunately to the bulk of theologians to know when to stop upon this subject, and to separate the unmixed truth which is in it from the gratuitous speculation. I cannot imagine a more befitting theme by which to try both our supreme respect for the deliverances of Scripture, along with utter distrust in our own powers, when directed to a matter that lies immeasurably beyond the farthest outskirts of that domain which is accessible to the human faculties. And then both for the varied

Scripture criticism which the question demands, and also for the insight which it gives into the principles and even the errors of the orthodox, we know of none more deeply interesting to the theological student, who cannot fail, from a thorough discussion of it, to learn much on the way of settling opinions in theology by Biblical interpretation, and much on the history and progress of opinions in the Church. It is a question, then, which forms an indispensable part of your professional literature. On this we hold no dispute, our only doubt was as to the rightness of the common arrangement; and we now, with a confidence which, in the face of so many authorities and examples, we really could not have felt till we had made the trial, must declare it as our purpose in all time coming to advance it to a greatly posterior, if not to the concluding place of all in the order of your theological studies.

Let it not be imagined that we overlook the moral importance of the doctrine, or regard it as of no effect or signification in respect of influence on the other doctrines which we propose to treat before it. For example, we hold it to be of mighty operation and power in enhancing every practical sentiment connected with our faith in the atonement; and should not this, it may be thought, give it a precedency in the order of our discussions? To meet this it should be recollected, on the other hand, that the doctrine of the atonement is admitted to have some influence on the argumentations in behalf of the Trinity; but the true reply in this and every other case is, that long anterior to the scientific establishment of any important doctrine whatever in Christianity, we have, in the broad and general aspect of revelation, a sufficiency of evidence for believing it. We might with all safety, for example, assume the divinity of Christ, not it is true for the purpose of demonstrating the truth of His propitiatory sacrifice, but for the purpose of exalting

either our confidence in its efficacy, or our gratitude for the condescension of so high a service. This we might do on the strength of those patent evidences which may be gathered in behalf of every momentous truth in religion from almost any popular translation of the Scriptures, adjourning in the meantime its critical defence and establishment to a posterior stage in the course. I have often said that in Scripture criticism the great object is not to discover but to defend; and for any other purpose than that of argument or demonstration, for the purpose of a moral or practical effect, we might avail ourselves of our discoveries now, and defend afterwards. There is nothing unfair or illogical in this management, and it is a management for which our science possesses peculiar susceptibilities. In treating, for example, of the atonement, we shall just advert as much or as little to the divinity of the Son of God and the divinity of the Holy Spirit, with these topics being discussed at the termination, as if discussed at the commencement of the course. We hold it incumbent upon us to vindicate one and all of the truths of Christianity, on the principles of solid criticism, against the adverse representations of heretics; but this ought not to affect the order of exposition in theology, nor does it present any adequate reason why the doctrine of man's moral character should not occupy the first place, and the doctrine of God's mysterious constitution the last place in the argumentations of our science.

It may be thought, however, that the effect of our whole argument is to establish the directest possible censure upon ourselves, seeing that we plead against an arrangement which hitherto we ourselves have observed, and for an arrangement which ourselves have unquestionably violated. In mitigation of the charge, we may state in the general, that professors, like other people, have just to feel their way to what is best; and more especially when

the meditated step is a departure from the established order, it is infinitely better that, instead of being precipitately done, we should wait the slow results of observation, and have somewhat like the firmness of an experimental basis to rest upon. It took Dr. Adam Ferguson twenty years ere his course settled down in that very order which conclusively satisfied him; and in a chapter of Smith's "Wealth of Nations," we have an admirable account of the successive modellings and remodellings, session after session, by which the Professor ripens the work of his class-room into a state of enduring excellence. Besides, we could not, without the satisfaction of a previous trial, contravene the order of every system and every text-book in theology that we are yet acquainted with, or propose to deliver the lessons of the science by a different succession of topics from that in which Calvin and Turretin, Pictetus and Vitringa, have delivered them. Therefore it was that after taking leave of the Natural Theology, we lifted ourselves up by a transcendental movement to the most transcendental of all the topics in the Christian theology. I felt the violence of the disruption, and, what was still more painful, had no doubt that the vast majority, if not the whole of the class, felt it along with me. It is anything but a good introduction to the scientific study of Christianity, to lay hold, in the first instance, of that topic which, among all others, presents the aspect of an impracticable enigma, and to unravel which we have to clear our way through a ceaseless mass of creeds and criticisms, the products either of modern sophistry or of ancient and scholastic barbarism. I felt a want of sympathy, and what is more, I dreaded the mischief on minds yet unpractised in the science; and though the expression be stronger than you perhaps can enter into, yet it is not stronger than to adequately convey my own sensations, when, on comparing this intermediate period with the genial topics of our introductory months,

and the still more genial topics on which we now expatiate, I offered you my sincere congratulations in that we had traversed the horrors of the middle passage. We may as well have a middle passage no longer, and I would far rather give the whole discussion a separate place in an appendix to the Course, than admit it as a constituent part at an early stage of it. We make the alteration, but not, you will allow, till after the substantial justice and the decent formalities of a full and lengthened trial.

We are glad to quit the region of transcendentals, and alight upon earth among the wants, and the feelings, and the moral aspirations of our own familiar nature. Instead of looking first to Christianity at the place where it retires into the viewless unknown of immensity, we look to it at the place where it bears on the urgent necessities of the human spirit, and holds forth an asylum to weary and heavy-laden men—instead of holding converse with her in dark cabalistic phraseology about the inaccessible secrets of heaven, we are to hold converse with her about the duties and the destinies of her own species. What a mighty refreshment to the spirit when it thus descends from the mysteries which are far out of view, and of which it can know nothing, to the matters that lie within the reach of its discernment, and on its knowledge of which there hinges the interest of its eternity!

BOOK I.—GENERAL AND INTRODUCTORY.

CHAPTER I.—PRELIMINARY ETHICS.

1. One science might advantageously be the object of our preliminary attention before entering on the study of another, although the latter should not be dependent on the former for its main evidence, or for the stability of the foundation on which it rests. It might be well, notwithstanding, for the mind to have been previously furnished with the views and principles of the first at the commencement of its systematic inquiries into the second, even though no single proposition in the acquired science should be so related to any doctrine of the one that is yet before us, as the premise of an argument is to its conclusion. The study of the Natural is righly held a proper introduction to the study of the Christian Theology—although the latter, with its own peculiar lights and its own proper evidences, is certainly not based upon the former in the same way that any system of truth is based on its first and fundamental principles. It may be right for the student to traverse the one theology, ere that, *as a student*, he makes ingress either on the evidences or subject-matter of the other. And, in like manner, it might prove in the highest degree serviceable that in the order of the sciences the study of ethics should be anterior to the study of both these theologies—of the greatest use, it may be, both in guiding us over the new field of investigation, and determining the best points of view from which to look at the objects there set before us, while these objects at the same time may be seen in their own proper light, and be shone upon by an independent evidence of their own. Were the dependence of the one science upon the other, in all its parts and propositions, a strictly logical one, then whatever of doubt or obscurity rested on the

one, would, in the process of deduction, be necessarily communicated to the other also. We disclaim all such connexion between the human science of ethics and the Divine science, if not of the natural, at least of the revealed theology; nor does it follow that, because moral philosophy is in the order of scholarship a fit precursor to the divinity of our halls and colleges, that therefore the mist of its controverted questions, the subtlety, and so the scepticism of its yet unsettled disputations, shall bedim those truths which we behold in the light of heaven, and which have been made known to us on the faith of satisfying credentials by an authentic and authoritative voice from the upper sanctuary.*

2. Nevertheless there are certain important bearings in which the propositions—even the yet unresolved questions of ethical science—stand to theology; and of these we now proceed to give a few specimens.

3. The first of these questions that we shall notice is perhaps the most general and elementary of them all, as it respects the very substance or ground of morality, and may be put in this form—Wherein is it that the rightness of morality lies? or, whence is it that this rightness is derived? Whether more particularly it have an independent rightness of its own, or it be right only because God wills it? It might be proper to state that between the two terms of the alternative as last put, our clear preference—or rather, our absolute and entire conviction—is on the side of the former. We hold that morality has a stable, inherent, and essential rightness in itself, and that anterior to or apart from, whether the tacit or expressed will of any being in the universe—that it had a subsistence and a character before that any creatures were made who could be the subjects of a will or a government at all, and when no other existed beside God Himself to exemplify its virtues and its graces. We, on the one hand, do not deny that it is absolutely and in itself right to obey the will of God, when we deny the assertion of certain moralists who tell us of all virtue that it is right only because God wills it—while they, on the other hand, cannot escape from the concession that there is at least one virtue which has this rightness in itself, and that is obedience to the Divine will; for if asked why is it right to obey God's will, they cannot run it up by the endlessly-repeating process of making always the same

* Natural Theology not the logical basis of the Christian, but an impellent to the inquiry after it.—See Gal. iii. 23, 24.

thing the reason or principle of itself, but must stop short at the conclusion that there is a rightness in the very nature of the thing, and that irrespective of anything different from or anterior to itself into which it can be resolved. But even after this matter has been adjusted, there remains this essential difference betwixt us. They might allow that in the virtue of obedience to God there is a native and independent rightness; but that no other virtue has this property, for that this obedience is comprehensive of all virtue, and that every other morality which can be named is virtuous only because God, the Sovereign Legislator, in framing the articles of His own code of government or law, hath so ordained it. Now it is here that we join issue with our antagonists, and affirm that God is no more the Creator of virtue than He is of truth—that justice and benevolence were virtues previous to any forthputting of will or jurisprudence on His part, and that He no more ordained them to be virtues, than He ordained that the three angles of a triangle should be equal to two right angles. The moral and the mathematical propositions have been alike the objects of the Divine approbation and the Divine perception from all eternity; but He no more willed the rightness of the one or the reality of the other, than He willed Himself into being, or willed what should be the virtues of His own character, or what the constitution of His own understanding. There is a wrong order in the conceptions of those moralists who resolve the virtuousness of morality either in respect of its essence or its foundation into the law of God.

4. This resolution of all virtue into the will of God has been designated the theological system of morals, and they who hold it have had the title given to them of theological moralists. Whether this have been meant as a stigma on our profession or not, the principle on which it has been affixed to us is one that we disclaim as alike inconsistent with sound ethics and sound theology. We can never consent to a proposition so monstrous as that, if an arbitrary God had chosen to reverse all the articles of the decalogue, He would thereby have presented the universe with a reverse morality that should be henceforth binding in point of duty and rectitude on all His creatures. Vice and virtue cannot thus be made to change places at the will or by the ordination of any power, whether dependent, or original and uncreated; and the same God of whom it has been so emphatically said that He cannot lie, can neither alter the char-

acteristics nor repeal the obligations of a morality which is immutable and everlasting.

5. And let it not be said that we hereby detract from the high prerogatives of the Eternal, or exalt a mere abstraction over the living Deity, by saying of morality that it is prior to His will and independent of His ordination. We dissociate not virtue from the Godhead—for apart from Him, it is but a shadowy and abstract conception existing only in the region of the ideal; and nowhere but in His character, unchanged and unchangeable, has it existed from everlasting as a concrete and substantive reality. In the Divinity alone it is that virtue has its fountainhead and its being—not, however, in the fountainhead of the Divine will; but higher than this and anterior to this, in the fountainhead of the Divine nature. It is not the will of God which determines His nature; but the nature of God which determines His will. That is a code of pure and perfect righteousness which is graven on the tablet of the Divine jurisprudence. But it did not originate there, for there it is but a transcript from the prior tablet of the Divine character. Virtue is not right because God wills it, but God wills it because it is right. The moral has antecedency to the juridical—having had its stable and everlasting residence in the constitution of the Deity, before that He willed it into a law for the government of His creatures.*

6. This argument is alike applicable both to the credentials of Revelation and to its practical lessons. For one can image a professed message from heaven resting its pretensions on the evidence of undoubted miracles, yet in its subject-matter palpably and glaringly immoral. There would be no perplexity in this, if we could believe that it was the law of God which constituted morality—for whatever the character of those mandates might be which came to us from the upper sanctuary, the very fact of their issuing thence could of itself turn vice into virtue, and sanctify every utterance that thus fell upon the world, because with a voice of authority from the throne of God. But if morality be not thus the creature of ordination, if it be fixed and everlasting as is the nature of Deity itself, and if the image of God in which man was formed, not yet altogether effaced, still remain with him in some of its lights and lineaments

* The morally right is anterior to law, nay, was exemplified from all eternity in the nature before it was enacted by the will and authority of God.—Psalm cxvi. 5; xix. 8; Eph. vi. 1; Phil. iv. 8.

—then might he too recognise that, and nothing else, to be righteous, which has been the object of God's perfect discernment and perfect love from all eternity. There might thus have arisen a serious and inextricable dilemma, had the external revelation come into conflict with the internal sense in a man's own breast of what is morally good or morally evil. If, in opposition to our mathematical sense, we had been told by one in the character of a prophet, and who worked miracles in support of his claim, that two and two made five—the very announcement would have darkened all the prior evidences of his mission, and thrown us back if not into a state of positive disbelief, at least of distressing scepticism. And the same would ensue, if in opposition to our moral sense, cruelty or falsehood or injustice had been canonized and enjoined as virtues. It is thus that our present argument bears directly on the proofs of revelation, and lays open at least one ligament of connexion between ethics and theology. Should the morals and miracles of the gospel stand to each other as opposing forces—the one might neutralize the other; and the whole external evidence of the record be nullified by the internal difficulties which lay in its subject-matter. But if, instead of this, they operate as conspiring forces—if, besides the historical evidence for its miracles, we can allege the purity and excellence of its morals, then instead of a balance ending perhaps in a cancelment or mutual destruction, there might be a summation of arguments; and the conviction grounded on the testimonies both of first and of subsequent witnesses, be enhanced by other reasons drawn from other and distinct quarters of contemplation.

7 But the speculation which now engages us, is not only applicable to the object of settling our belief in the truth of the Christian revelation, it is alike applicable to the work of urging and enforcing its lessons. The rightness, the absolute and independent rightness, of any grace or virtue, is not to be lost sight of by the preachers of gospel morality; for certainly it was not lost sight of by the first teachers and apostles of our faith—it being not only present as a consideration to their own minds, but urged as a motive on the observance of their disciples—"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, *for this is right.*" Nothing can be more unquestionable than the rightness of our obedience to God; and this singly, or of itself, is sufficient to infuse the element of moral obligation into every mandate which proceedeth from His mouth. But even in the eye

of His own messengers, this did not overshadow the native and inherent rightness of that which is enjoined by Him; and so, instead of resting exclusively on the naked authority of God, we find them making a direct appeal to the moral judgments of men —mingling as it were the transcendental light of heaven with the light of nature in human consciences; and meeting with a response and a manifestation there, when they dealt in those lessons, which were not only backed by all the authority of that inspiration wherewith they were charged, but the rightness of which might without inspiration be read and recognised of all men. There is an obvious respect both for the voice within the heart of individual man, and for the collective voice of society in the following memorable deliverance—"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

8. The next theory of virtue which we propose briefly to consider, is the utilitarian system of morals, based on the experience that nothing is morally good which is not useful—an experience which, even though it held universally, does not of itself warrant the conclusion which has been raised upon it—that it is the usefulness of any given act or habit which constitutes its virtuousness, or in which its virtuousness altogether lies. This was strenuously advocated by Hume, and is identically the system of our present utilitarians. The elements of its conclusive refutation are to be found in the Sermons of Bishop Butler. But our object at present is not so much to estimate the soundness of any ethical dogma, as to point out the bearing which its subject-matter has on the science of theology.

9. This system is subject to the like modifications with that which we have already considered, and which has been denominated or stigmatized as the theological system of morals. It is true, that to do the will of God is a virtue, yet it follows not that in this and this alone the rightness of all virtue lies; and it is also true that God wills all virtue, yet it follows not that all morality is virtuous only because God wills it. In like manner, to do or desire that which is useful is one of the virtues, and one of high eminence in the scale, but it may not on that account form the essence or constituting quality of all the virtues; and it may be also true, that all virtue is useful, and yet that much of virtue has a rightness and obligation in itself apart from its usefulness. With these points of analogy, however,

between the two systems, there is one respect in which they differ most glaringly. In the first, God is regarded by its advocates as all in all, and rightly, had they but kept free of their mistake in dating the origin of morality from the will of God, when they should have dated it from His uncreated and essential nature. In the second, God may be said to be altogether excluded, there being no account taken by its disciples of either His character or will. We have but to imagine ourselves placed under a different economy, with such other laws, whether of the mental or material constitution, as that vice should yield a greater amount of happiness than virtue—and then virtue and vice would instantly change places. Morality, instead of being referred to the pre-existent character of God, or being the prescription of divine authority, becomes the mere product of human experience—what man finds to be most useful being the rule and the standard of duty. The former has been called the theological system of morals. It might be harsh to denominate the other the atheistical system of morals; but certain it is that its principles, and all the materials for its regular construction, can be found and put together without so much as the recognition of a God. It were a system which might be framed by atheists, though in itself so defective and unpractical as not to be the best fitted for meeting the exigencies even of a state of atheism.

10. On this question, too, there hinges an argument for a God, which is either nullified or made good according as it is determined—whether morality lies in usefulness alone, or in itself the object of our simple and direct perception it has an underived primary and peculiar character of its own? Should the former opinion be adopted, then to affirm the usefulness of morality, is but to affirm an identical proposition—a mere verbal or logical or necessary truism, from which no inference can be drawn. Should the other and we hold the sounder opinion be adopted—then to affirm the usefulness of morality is to affirm the actual conjunction of two different things, which are separable in idea, and might have been separate in fact, but for the determination of that power which hath ordained the laws and the connexions of our actual universe. If righteousness on the one hand, and usefulness on the other, be two distinct categories—then, not in their unity, but in their union, do we behold a contingency which of itself affords the glorious manifestation of a presiding morality in the system of our world. If it indeed be true that a universal virtue would, under the actual economy of things,

bring a universal happiness in its train, and that generally the miseries and manifold discomforts of human existence can be traced to deviations from the rule of rectitude—there cannot be a more complete experimental demonstration of the regimen under which we live being indeed a regimen of virtue. But virtue by itself is but an abstraction, a character which without a being is efficient of nothing, but which as the efficient cause of the system in which we are placed, and all the laws and tendencies of which are so palpably on the side of righteousness, infers a real and living and withal a righteous sovereign. The utilitarian system of morals would make this argument void, or at least cast an obscuration over it, while the orthodox and accredited system restores to it that full effect and clearness and significancy which makes it distinctly available for the demonstration of a God. This affords another specimen of the bearing which subsists between these cognate themes of academic discipline and instruction—or another proof how intimately blended the two sciences of ethics and theology are with each other.

11. If utility be virtue, then, in some other economy of things taken at random, it is imaginable both of mind and matter as so differently constituted, that society might have found its greatest happiness in a morality the reverse in all its characteristics to that which now commands and unites the suffrages of mankind. At this rate the moral is but the handmaid of the physical; and virtue becomes a mere derivative—a manufacture out of the existent materials and laws of the actual system, whatever that may be. It is difficult to see how an ethics thus framed and originated could at all help to build up a theology, or could contribute any evidence for a God. Not so if virtue, instead of an originated product, is an original principle, in conformity to which, at the same time, a world has been so constructed and ordained that the greatest enjoyment of those who live in it would be the result of a general adherence to its lessons and its rules. We should say of the natural government of such a world, that it was a government of virtue. But as we could not rest in aught so imaginary and ideal as the government of a mere abstraction, we should pass from the abstract to the concrete, and find a residence for this virtue in some being who realized upon his own character its perfection and its graces. In other words, let virtue be distinct from utility, yet ours be a world so constituted as that utility is the actual and the universal product of virtue—then, instead of stopping short at a gener-

ality or a name, we should find our way to a living God; and from such a natural government of righteousness as this, would instantly conclude for at once a righteous and a reigning Governor.

12. But let us now descend to certain of the particular virtues, and notice more expressly the views of those speculators in ethical science who look on truth and justice as having no distinct or independent virtuousness of their own, but as being the mere offshoots or modifications of benevolence, their one great and all-pervading morality. Nothing can be more obvious than the vast and important subserviency both of truth and justice to the cause of usefulness, whereof in fact they are the direct and indispensable ministers in the converse and mutual transactions which take place between man and man in society. Yet it follows not that these are virtues, because of this subserviency alone; or that to their beneficial influence on the affairs of the world, the whole of their moral rectitude or moral obligation is owing. Certain it is that when men either fulfil a promise, or pay a debt, or deliver a conscientious testimony, they do so without any respect held by the mind to the usefulness of these observances, or any consideration of this element being at the time present with it. They again who would vindicate the analogies by which they resolve all the virtues into benevolence alone, tell us of the extreme rapidity of our mental transitions—so rapid and so fugitive as to pass unnoticed, or with a celerity too evanescent for human consciousness. It might well be replied that this is a confession of a total want of positive evidence for their theory; and that it seems a very insufficient basis for any doctrine, thus to ground it on an *argumentum ab ignorantia*. But without entering into the controversy any farther, it is enough for our purpose that we state the sides of it; or that while the one party would claim for truth and justice and holiness an independent *status* as moral virtues, co-ordinate with, while distinct from the virtue of benevolence—the other party contend, that not only in the system of abstract ethics are they all reducible to benevolence alone, but that when lifting our contemplations to the character of Him who is supreme and eternal, though we speak of His various moral perfections as if they stood apart or had a substantive distinctness from each other, yet all are briefly comprehended in this saying—that God is love.

13. Now we do not advance it as a full and definite solution, because too well aware of the confusion and mischief which have

ensued from making inroad by the proper views and principles of one science on the distinct territory of another; yet we can see that at least one doctrine in the Christian theology, and that of weightiest importance among them all, might well serve to strengthen and confirm the advocates of the former opinion—we mean the doctrine of the atonement. In this great and solemn transaction, devised in heaven and consummated on earth, there seems a wondrous homage to the high claims and the immutable authority of that truth and that justice which stood in the way of a world's reconciliation; and to provide for which in a manner consistent with these sacred attributes, was that mystery of the divine jurisprudence which angels desired to look into. The raising of such an apparatus, if we may so express it, as that of a redemption by sacrifice, and this in order to harmonize the overtures of mercy to our guilty species, with the high prerogatives of that law which they had violated, speaks powerfully to our apprehension for the underived and original character of those great moral perfections which were exhibited and put forth by God in the high capacity of a Lawgiver—of that justice which both ordained and executes the law, and of that truth which stood committed to the enforcement of its penalties. If that system which affirms the separate and independent virtuousness of these high characteristics be entitled from the number and authority of its supporters to the appellation of the orthodox system of morals, then is it interesting here to observe so close a relationship of the two sciences, and how at this place of meeting between them the orthodox ethics and the orthodox theology are at one.*

14. This example will make apparent, we hope, the soundness of our observation on the study of ethics as a useful preliminary to the study of theological science. While at the same time this latter science, this theology, rests and is mainly supported, not on the lessons of any previous science, but on a proper and independent evidence of its own. Who, for instance, should ever think of basing the doctrine of the atonement on any ethical category whatever?—or of making it hinge on the determination of the question, whether truth and justice have in themselves an intrinsic or only a subordinate and derived virtuousness? Let this controversy be settled as it may, the

* The harmony which subsists between the doctrine of an independent virtuousness in justice and truth, and the doctrine of the atonement.—Rom. iii. 26; Isa. xlii. 21; Ps. lxxxv. 10.

previous truth of our atonement stands on the same unaltered and impregnable footing as before—even on the clear averments of a perfect revelation, having distinct and satisfying credentials to authenticate the reality of its descent from the upper sanctuary. And yet it is well for the thoughtful inquirer, that he should bring this great theological proposition into contact and comparison with the dogmata of his prior school; and that he should enjoy the reflex light and confirmation which it casts on his earlier and more elementary studies. It is interesting to remark that the meagre theology which disowns an atonement and denies the need of one, chiefly prevails among the disciples of the utilitarian philosophy, or those who would resolve all the perfections of the Almighty into the single attribute of benevolence; while, on the other hand, they who have been accustomed to view truth and justice as in themselves the objects of direct and ultimate recognition, if they carry this contemplation upward to the throne of heaven, will regard Him who sitteth thereon as the Sovereign as well as parent of the human family. They will feel that not only is a tenderness to be indulged, but an authority to be upheld and vindicated; and should they contrast aright the sinfulness of man with the sacredness of God, will they prize the revealed doctrine of the atonement as they would the alone specific for a mortal and universal disease which had come upon the species—the best suited to the moral exigencies of our nature, and so the worthiest of all acceptation.

15. For our next example of a close and interesting application between the two sciences of ethics and theology, would we now select, not any controverted doctrine, but rather an aphorism or undoubted axiom of the former science. It might be announced with all the certainty of a first principle, that nothing is virtuous, or vicious either, which is not voluntary. Ere an act, or a disposition, or a mental state of whatever kind, can become susceptible of a moral designation, can be rightly characterized either as morally good or morally evil, the will must have somehow had to do with it, either as an immediate or remote antecedent, which gave occasion or birth to the thing in question. This is a proposition which requires no argument to carry it, for it must command the instant assent of every conscience. Whether it be a deed, or a desire, or a belief on which we are called to pass sentence, the choice must have had some part in it before it can come within the scope of a moral or judicial reckoning at all, or be properly the subject either of moral blame

or moral approbation. In other words, we must be able to allege that a volition which should or should not have been put forth has had some concern in the matter, ere we can say of anything that either, on the one hand, this is its praise, or on the other hand, that this is its condemnation.

16. Now, it may be thought that this, as being a truism rather than a truth, scarcely deserves the formality of so express an introduction to the notice of the mind. Yet we have thus signalized it, and that notwithstanding its extreme simplicity or obviousness; for though plain in itself as the lesson of any school-boy, it, like other initial or elementary principles, teems with the weightiest and most important applications. For instance, it is by the help of this principle, and we think in no other way, that we establish the important position of a man's responsibility for his belief; and that we can point out wherein lies the criminality of wrong affections; and that we can even vindicate the transcendental, or, as some would term it, the hard and revolting dogma of predestination, from the aspersions cast upon it as at war with the moral sense of mankind, and subversive of all moral government. We do not say of ethical science, alone, dealing as it does only with abstractions, that of itself it is competent to these achievements. But the ethical principle which we have just announced enters into and forms an essential part of these various demonstrations, to complete which, however, we must have recourse to the phenomena and laws of the mental physiology—a department on which we propose to set foot afterwards. Meanwhile we think it right to single out for special notice and recollection that maxim in ethics by which the manifestations now promised can in our view be abundantly made good; and the theology of our evangelical system, in full accordance with all that is sacred in the academic philosophy, can be amply justified against the indignation and abuse that have been heaped upon it.*

17. There is still another lesson given forth by ethical writers wherewith it were well if the student of theology could make himself familiar, and carry forth to its right and legitimate bearings on the questions of his own science. We advert to the distinction made by them between the duties of perfect and imperfect obligation. That is a virtue of perfect obligation where, corresponding to the duty on one side, there is a counterpart

* That for any act or disposition to be susceptible of a moral designation, whether of blame or of approval, the will must have to do with it—John iii. 19; v. 40; vii. 17.

right upon the other. Truth and justice are virtues of this class. If I make a promise to any man, it is not only my duty to fulfil the same, but, counterpart to this, I have invested him with a right to exact it of me. If I even but deliver a testimony in his hearing, it is my duty to be most scrupulously accurate; and he, on the other hand, has a right upon my faithfulness. Should either of these turn out to be false, then, unless from my want of power or knowledge I could not have helped it, has he a right to complain of an injury—in the first instance, that I have disappointed, in the second, have deceived him; in the one case by raising in his mind a treacherous expectation, and in the other, a wrong belief. Then, passing on from truth to justice, should I contract a bargain with another, it is not only my duty to make good its terms, but it is his right to demand the execution of them; or should I owe him a debt, it is not only my duty to render, but it is his right to enforce the payment of it. These cases make quite clear what that is which constitutes a duty of perfect obligation; and, on the other hand, we might exemplify in like manner those of the imperfect class—where there is a duty on the one side, but no corresponding right upon the other. It is my duty to forgive a wrong; but it were a contradiction in terms to say of the culprit who had committed the wrong, that he had a right to this forgiveness. It is my duty to give of my own to the necessitous around me; but it were a like contradiction to speak of their right to this liberality—for whatever they have a right to is not my own, is not mine, but theirs; or, in other words, their right to a thing makes that thing their property, and in giving it to them we fulfil not an act of liberality but of justice. Benevolence is an undoubted duty; but it involves a paralogism to say of any man that he has a right to my benevolence, and proceeds on the mistake of confounding two virtues which are essentially distinct from each other—the virtues of justice and humanity. Benevolence is my duty to him, but it is not therefore his right upon me; and so, in terms of the usual definition given by moralists, benevolence, in its various modifications and forms, is still a virtue of imperfect obligation.

18. The distinction, though it sounds somewhat scholastically, and has so far fallen into desuetude that many look upon it as exploded, is still an eminently practical one, and of capital importance in the business of legislation. Some of the greatest errors into which statesmen have fallen have arisen from the neglect of it. The proper object of law is to enforce the duties

of perfect, but not those of imperfect obligation. It is to make sure for each man the undisturbed possession of his rights, which it does by repressing the infraction of them; or what is tantamount to this, the great use and function of law in society is to protect the members of it from wrong. And thus it is that it has to deal principally and pre-eminently with questions of justice between man and man; but never was a greater blunder committed than when, overstepping her own boundaries, law, not satisfied with the enforcement of justice, aimed further at the enforcement of humanity. It does not lie within the province of human law to compel those duties on the part of one man, for which there is no correspondent right on the part of any other man. They may be morally binding; but it is by an unwarrantable stretch beyond the limits of a rightful jurisprudence, if on that account singly they are made to be legally binding also. It is only with a part of virtue that human law has to do. There is a remainder on which it cannot intrude without serious injury both to the cause of morals and to the best interests of society.

19. But not so with divine law, which takes cognizance of all virtue, and claims ascendency over the whole man. Man, though he has right to the justice, has no right to the benevolence of his fellow. But God has. He has full right to all our services, and in reference to Him the distinction ceases; and the obligation not of one class of duties, but of all duty, is perfect and entire. And so He is alike peremptory in requiring benevolence, as in requiring truth or justice at our hands; and with perfect reason too—for to every duty which can be named on the part of man, there is a corresponding right on the part of God. Man has no right upon us for any part of that which is our own. But in reference to God, we are not our own; and that distinction which in the morals and jurisprudence of earth is of so much importance, and should never be lost sight of, is not so recognised, and not so proceeded on in the jurisprudence of heaven. Even under the system of natural theology, God has a full and perfect right upon us for those duties which are said to be of imperfect obligation; and this more special right of His to our performance of the so-called imperfect duties, has a still more special and distinctive character of strength and prominency given to it in the Christian theology. Because Christ died for us, we should live to Him; or in other words, all our powers and affections and virtues of any sort should be consecrated to His

service. Because He laid down His life for us, we should lay down our lives for the brethren—a duty this to which, in the reckoning of an earthly morals, or under an economy of earthly law, there would be the most imperfect of all obligations. Because God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. Because God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us, we should forbear and forgive one another: and so absolute is the obligation of this latter duty, though perhaps in the system of natural ethics the most obviously imperfect of any—that on our failure in the performance of it, we forfeit the blessings of our redemption. (Matt. vi. 15.) Nay, in the description of the final judgment, we find that upon benevolence are made to turn the rewards of an eternity; and that which on the mere platform of human society would be the mere rendering of a gratuity to a neighbour, rises from the imperfect to the perfect, when viewed in the light of a return for the kindness, or as if it were in payment of a debt to the Saviour.*

20. Nay, so great is the pre-eminence given in the gospel of Jesus Christ to this benevolence, this virtue of imperfect obligation, that it is made to overshadow the others in a way which almost seems to supersede them, or to dispense with the necessity of making these the objects of our recognition at all. And accordingly we read of love being the fulfilment of all the law, and of all the other virtues, including both truth and justice, not that they are abrogated, but that they are briefly comprehended in this saying—Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. It is thus that the law of the gospel has been called the law of liberty—of which no better definition can be given than freedom to do as we like—so that if we like our neighbour, we shall be sure, and that not of constraint, but of our own spontaneous choice, to work him no ill—a practical security, and that of the best sort, against any infraction of any of the virtues of perfect obligation. And thus it may be thought of these virtues that they might forthwith disappear from the system of Christian ethics altogether—that charity absorbs all, because itself a universal substitute it comes in place of all; and thus that the speculation of all the moralities being reducible to benevolence, which we have so recently ventured to denounce, will come to be realized and exemplified in that state of perfection which is

* The distinction between the duties of perfect and imperfect obligation is the real ground and subsistence of the moralities which men owe to each other, but not of those which man owes to God.—1 Cor. x. 31.

contemplated by the apostle when he tells of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

21. Does it follow, then, that after charity or love has had its perfect work in the heart, it so monopolizes the whole field of vision that a Christian, when thus far advanced, loses sight of truth and justice—so as that henceforth they disappear from observation, and resign that distinctive individuality for which we have been contending, to the benevolence which, in accordance with the tenet of those ethical philosophers against whom we have hitherto been listed, is now all in all? Our reply on the contrary is, that the moral virtues of truth and justice, and that too in their distinctive peculiarity, continue the perpetual objects of recognition and reverence to the Christian disciple throughout all the stages of his spiritual advancement, and in this way, it is quite true, that in virtue of the benevolence wherewith his heart is now charged, he will not be inclined to the violation of them, any more than the spirit of a just man made perfect, and so filled with all moral excellence, is inclined to sin. But with the real perfection of a saint in heaven, or with an aspiring progress and tendency towards it on earth, there will be something more than disinclination to sin. There will be an abhorrence of sin—not a mere negative indifferency, but a strong positive energetic recoil from the very conception of sin. It is this, in fact, which constitutes holiness—of which it were a wrong definition to say that it consisted in perfect virtue. This is not what holiness properly and precisely is. To have a right understanding of what that is, and nothing else, which we call holiness—we must look, not to virtue in itself, but to virtue in relation to its opposite; and the specific or essential characteristic of holiness lies in the repugnance, a repugnance which with the Godhead is infinite and invincible, that is felt to sin. Now, applying this to the present question, the mere fact of one or any number of Christians having had the law of love put into their hearts, cannot possibly affect the abstract system of ethics, which will remain in all its parts, and in all its diversities between one part and another, the same doctrine or body of propositions after this event as before it. More particularly, there would remain as wide a distinction between justice and benevolence as ever, and no change whatever in concrete persons could, in any conceivable way, lead to such a change of abstract principles as would merge these two into one and the same object of contemplation. Take two persons of great and nearly equal

generosity, so near as that when tested it was found of the one that for the relief of the same case of distress he gave half a farthing more than the other. Take other two persons, each acquitting himself of the same contract; and let it be found that while the first rigidly kept by the terms of his bargain, the second in the settlement of his, knowingly, deliberately, and by a dishonest artifice, contrived to secrete and appropriate for himself half a farthing which did not belong to him. Who would ever think of estimating these two differences on the same principles or in the same manner? How comes it that while the material differences are precisely the same, the moral differences are so wholly unlike, and that not in degree but in species? Why, it is because the virtues concerned in the two transactions are of different species. The defect of the one man's generosity from the other's is of no sensible estimation. The contrast between the one man's dishonesty and the other's faithfulness, is as distinctly marked and as broadly discernible as is the contrast between light and darkness. In the first case, we are presented with gradations of the same colour. In the second, we are presented with the different hues of two opposite colours. It is all true that the same Christian love which prompted the generosity would also refrain from the injustice; but if a Christian in all his parts, he would do more than simply refrain from the injustice—he would recoil from it, and that with the clear and full and instant determination of one who had been well taught in the lesson, that "he who was unfaithful in the least was unfaithful also in much." Such morality, the morality though it may seem of grains and scruples, is the highest toned morality of all—not that which takes alarm only at the grosser and more glaring enormities of human conduct, but that which would shrink from the minutest violations whether of truth or of justice. If to recoil from the first approaches of impurity or profaneness be the holiness of the sacred —then to recoil from the first approaches of falsehood or dishonesty, however venial they might appear to this every-day world, may well be termed the holiness of the social virtues—a holiness for which there is place and exercise even under the full reign of that charity which never faileth; and accordingly heaven is at once the abode both of love and of holiness. And thus it is that the Christian servant told not to purloin, would spurn away every temptation to taste or to touch a forbidden thing; and the Christian overseer would resolutely keep himself from every unhallowed freedom with the property of his em-

ployer; and the Christian merchant would disdain the paltry deception or concealment which might magnify his gains. There is nothing in the power or prevalence of Christian love to obliterate the virtues, or to banish from the society of earth the sacred and venerable forms, either of unswerving fidelity, or of high and untainted honour. And the same truth and justice which flourish here are transplanted to the land of uprightness beyond the grave, and are there the themes of immortal celebration—"Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints; thou only art holy."*

22. We have already intimated that there is a certain laxity of doctrine associated with the ethical speculation of those who would put truth and justice on the background, by making them a sort of secondaries or subordinates to the great master-virtue of benevolence. And we may further say of many in society, that, though not entertained as a theory, yet felt as a sentiment, it is in them associated with a certain laxity of practice. Free and fearless in expenditure, and with an openhandedness which passes for generosity, they can be profuse in hospitality, nay, even munificent in the exercise of compassion, when a tale of wretchedness is brought to their ears. Yet, just because there is more of impulse than of principle in all their well-doing, are they somewhat loose withal to the virtues of perfect obligation—not very punctual to their engagements—not very faithful to the days or the terms of stipulated payment—not over-scrupulous should there be any openings of escape from the tribute which is due by them—not very observant of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, when higgling in markets, they would either unconscionably cheapen down the article they want to buy, or try to palm off on others the commodity in which they deal—in a word, with many of the frank and companionable virtues of good neighbourhood, not very strict or literal in the discharge of those cardinal duties over against which there stand the counterpart rights of creditors or customers or employers. Theirs is what may be called the liberalism of virtue; and it is among them that splendid bankruptcies and splendid phœnix-like revivals, and to account for these, we fear, splendid frauds are often to be found. But this relaxation is not confined to such. It is met in every class of society; nor are we aware of a fitter theme in all Christian

* Perfect holiness is perfect virtue, but in a peculiar aspect, that of separation and recoil from its opposite.—1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

ethics for the pulpit, and that to serve the purposes both of conviction and of direct moral tuition, than to denounce and to expose it. The minister when thus employed is standing up for what we have just styled the holiness of social virtue, when he tells the servants in a family not to purloin, and labourers in the field not to serve with eye-service, and men in the walks of merchandise not in their love of money, which is the root of all evil, to forget the simplicity and godly sincerity of Christian disciples, even though their fellows should laugh at them as simpletons. And, in short, when he charges all and sundry of his hearers against those secret and unseen but innumerable peccadilloes which are so currently practised in the various departments of service, or housekeeping, or trade, or confidential agency, of far too various a character in the complicated relations of business and society for our enumeration.*

23. But a just sense of this ethical distinction may serve not only to enlighten and confirm our views of Christian practice—it should also rectify our apprehensions of Christian doctrine. I should like you to ponder well the difference between a legal right and a moral rightness, or which is the same thing, between a right in the substantive and rightness in the adjective sense of the term. The character of moral rightness is predicable of all virtue, but it is only a part of virtue to my performance of which any of my fellows in society can have a legal or judicial right. It is right for me to be benevolent, but no man can allege a right to my benevolence as he can a right to my justice. It is right for me to forgive, but no man can allege a right to the forgiveness of an injury, as he can to the payment of a debt. In short, it is right that I should acquit myself of all the virtues, even those of imperfect obligation; but none on earth have a right upon me for my other virtues than those of perfect obligation. Now it is the *équivoque* of two terms so near in language, yet applied to things so different in reality, which has led to a certain sense of ambiguity in our understanding of certain passages, and so in our attempts to estimate aright certain doctrines of the New Testament; and it is only by attending to the distinction between a judicial right and a moral rightness that the ambiguity is resolved. The righteousness of which we read there, as well as its counterpart δικαιοσύνη in the Greek, is expressive sometimes of that righteousness which has acquired

* The magnitude of fidelity in littles when brought to a moral standard.—Gen. xiv. 23; Luke xvi. 10.

or made good a right to reward, and sometimes of that righteousness which, apart from the judicial element altogether, stamps a moral or personal worth upon the character. Now, in the former sense, the righteousness of man is utterly held at nought under the Christian dispensation; and by its economy the most ruinous error into which man can fall is attempting to establish such a righteousness of his own—the very stumblingblock at which the Jews stumbled; and a stumblingblock to the men of all generations who think, by their own obedience, to substantiate a legal claim to the Divine favour, or to the preferments of a blissful eternity. But in the latter sense the righteousness of man is not only in highest demand; but his restoration to entire personal virtue is announced to be the ultimate design of the Christian dispensation—the terminating object of which is that the man of God may be perfect and thoroughly furnished unto all good works. It is in virtue of the distinction now explained, that we are enabled to resolve the seeming inconsistency of these seemingly opposite representations. The righteousness of man is of no possible avail for the establishment of his judicial right to a place in heaven; and for this we must look exclusively and altogether to the righteousness of Christ. But the righteousness of man is indispensable to his personal meetness for heaven; and this can only be made good by his working mightily in the strength of that Spirit for whom he prays, and who works in him mightily. In other words, the righteousness of man contributes nothing to his justification. It is all in all for his sanctification; and it is thus that passages and doctrines which some regard as destructive of each other admit of being fully harmonized.*

CHAPTER II.

PRELIMINARY METAPHYSICS AND MENTAL PHYSICS.

1. METAPHYSICS have been variously defined—at first, the science of the principles and causes of all things existing. We conceive Lord Monboddo's description of this science, and which might be accepted for a definition of it, is still more compre-

* Righteousness is judicially understood when associated with the doctrine of justification, and morally understood when associated with sanctification.—Rom. x. 3, 4; Matt. v. 20.

hensive—that its province is to consider that τὰ ὄντα ἢ ὄντα existences only as existences. It looks to all the things which be, but not in their special properties by which each is distinguished from all others; for on descending to these, we touch on some of the secondary or subordinate sciences. It looks to them in their common property of existence, and considers what is involved in the one universal attribute "to be." Our reason for saying of this view that it is more comprehensive than the first one, is, that it includes properties and relations as well as principles and causes. For example, we might affirm, or at least discuss the question, whether all existent things, in virtue of existence alone, have not a relation to, or do not exist both in space and time, neither of which, let them be viewed either as substantive elements in themselves, or as mere elements of thought, can be regarded as the principle or cause of anything existing. Still metaphysics, so far as yet described, may be reckoned as but the science of entity; and as such it were exclusive of certain topics which never can be discussed without being viewed as metaphysical. For example, neither mathematics nor ethics, when treated abstractly, have to do with things concrete—the one being the science of quantity, and the other, alike without the limits of ontology, whose category is the *quid est*, being the science of deontology, whose altogether distinct category is the *quid oportet*. The mathematical relations of the first science, and the moral relations of the second, have an independent truth in themselves, although there were no existent being in the universe to substantiate or exemplify either of them. The propositions of mathematical science depend not for their truth on the existence of matter; and the propositions of moral science depend not for their truth on the existence of mind—though ere perhaps we could conceive of them, both matter and mind must be thought of or have a hypothetical existence given to them. And yet we could not affirm thus of these two sciences without being charged with speaking metaphysically. They also therefore must have to do with metaphysics; and indeed it is currently held of every science that it has a metaphysics, whether it lie within or beyond the province of ontology. We should therefore regard it as a better adjustment, a more convenient distribution of the objects of human thought, if we should adopt, as the strict definition of metaphysics, what it is often called—not the first philosophy, for besides not being in all respects true, this would not serve the purposes of a definition

so well as another ascription which has been given to it—the science of sciences. We confess our preference for such a definition to any of the former ones. Each science sits as arbiter on its own proper objects—its office being to ascertain and to record the specific characters of every distinct individual, as well as the similarities and differences which obtain amongst them. Now the proper objects of the metaphysical science are distinct from the objects of any or of all the others; for, in truth, the proper objects of metaphysics are the sciences themselves. It, as being the *scientia scientiarum*, sits as arbiter over all the sciences; and its office is to assign the peculiarities by which each differs from the rest, and the generalities in which two or more of them agree—rising to higher and higher generalizations in proportion to the number of sciences which are under survey and comparison at the time. Should we ever be able to arrive at the one generalization which belongs to them all, we shall then have reached the loftiest possible abstraction, the point or summit of highest transcendentalism.

2. According to this view of metaphysics, it stands related to all the sciences in the way that each particular science is related to all the individual objects wherewith it is conversant. To divest the mind of all philosophy even to its first beginnings, or in its earliest rudiments, one would need to be so constructed as to be capable of knowing all the things within his sphere of observation only as individuals; and we are not sure if idiots or the inferior animals can attain to more. Should ten objects have the same property, or ten events fall out by the same process, then, from the moment that one takes cognizance of this sameness, he enters on the work of philosophy, the proper business of which is to form individuals into classes, by grouping them according to their resemblances. The man who can tell me of ten different things, whether he be a peasant or an academician, that they are all of a white colour, or all possess the common property of whiteness, is *pro tanto* a philosopher. And thus it is, that throughout the popular mind, and in the business of human society, there is in current and familiar exercise an essential philosophy, though it be not so named. The only difference between the philosophy of common sense and the philosophy which men have agreed to call such, is, that the latter has to do with larger generalizations, and more especially if, to extend the generalization, much labour has to be bestowed. All men are aware of a very general resemblance amongst falling

bodies at the surface of the earth; and in having thus generalized, they acted the real part of philosophers, although they are not styled such; but when Sir Isaac Newton extended this generalization, and made palpable the likeness between a body falling towards the centre of the earth and the moon deflecting towards it in its orbit, this was honoured as a high achievement in philosophy; and he became the very prince of philosophers on the discovery of a still wider generalization, even that all matter gravitates towards all matter. This law of gravitation is a very general fact, far more general than that all bodies at the earth's surface are possessed of weight, so that if left without support, they will fall towards the earth's centre. But each law of nature has been well defined the summary expression of a general fact; and the proper function of philosophy is to view all objects and all events according to their resemblances, so as to ascertain and to registrate these laws. But the work of philosophy, like every other, is expedited by subdivision; and so it is separated into sciences; each having to do with those narrower generalities that lie within the limits of its own proper domain, and by which all the individual objects of that department are grouped or classified, in so far as they have any of those properties in common which it is the office of that science to investigate. The proper distinction then, I apprehend, between metaphysics and the other sciences is, that it has to do with higher and wider generalizations than any of them. It views the sciences as individuals, and takes note both of the differences and the likenesses between them. In so doing, it will group not the objects of one science only, but the objects of several, and at length of all the sciences, by a wider generality, by a higher generic quality, comprehensive of a far larger number of individual objects than come within the view of the mere cultivators of any of the separate sciences. The work, then, of the metaphysician is essentially of the same kind with that of the ordinary philosopher; and the only difference is, that he has to do with larger and higher generalizations. We have already seen how common sense graduates into philosophy; and we may now see how philosophy graduates into metaphysics.

3. Let us illustrate our meaning by one or two examples taken from the physical sciences. I will first advert to the distinction laid down by Professor Robison of Edinburgh, between the two sciences of natural philosophy and chemistry—the subsect of both being inorganic matter, but of the one the changes

induced in it by motions which are sensible and measurable; and of the other, the changes induced by motions not sensible and not measurable. According to our conception of metaphysics, the Professor was acting the part of a metaphysician when thus arbitrating between these sciences, and assigning the property common to both, as well as the peculiarity which belonged to each of them. But in making this statement to one of the ablest and profoundest of my literary friends, it was his obvious feeling that metaphysics had its place in a region of loftier and larger generalities than any involved in the classification as now given of these two sciences. I then instanced another of Dr. Robison's fine generalizations, by which he assumed a more comprehensive meaning for natural philosophy than was just now assigned to it. He partitioned the whole philosophy of matter into two sciences—the first being what he termed the science of contemporaneous nature, and the second of successive nature—the one being conversant with the objects of the material universe, the other with the events of the material universe—the one having to do with properties all existing together, and of which cognizance could be taken in one instant by a being of perfect intuition, and who had the whole system of things spread out in space before him; the other having to do with processes for the development of which the element of time had to be introduced, that so those changes might be evolved which fell within the contemplation of the second of these two sciences. Now the first, or the science of contemporaneous nature, he called natural history; the second, or science of successive nature, he called natural philosophy. On asking my friend whether in this new adjustment of the scheme of human knowledge, metaphysics were at all concerned, he seemed willing to admit their share in the fabrication of it, though I cannot see why they should have been refused a part in the former classification, and allowed it in the latter, but for the greater and lesser degrees of generality in the circumstances both of similarity and distinction, on which the two classifications turned—matter, space, time, being terms of far wider generality than motion, sensible and measurable, or motion not so. We retain, therefore, our preference for that view of metaphysics, as having the office of sitting in judgment on the sciences, and pronouncing on the relations which subsist between them; and if, when performing this office on the lower subdivisions of human knowledge, there seems to be a descent among ideas too limited and palpable for that

science which has been ennobled by the title of the first philosophy, this will be amply compensated when rising to higher divisions, and so to larger generalities, we shall find in the midst of such categories as space, and time, and causation, and power, and all the other terms whereof the nomenclature of abstract speculation is composed, that we have not missed, but at length got our way to a region as transcendental and full of undoubted metaphysics as any schoolman could desire.

4. Our definition, then, of metaphysics is, that as *scientia scientiarum*, her proper office is to assign the relations, whether of resemblance or distinction, which subsist between the various branches of human knowledge.

5. Theology draws on many of the sciences—nay, so many of them enter more or less into the composition of her entire system, that for the full accomplishment of a theological student, his pursuits must be exceedingly various, and to discriminate these, there must be a call for metaphysics in the sense now given. You will not be surprised therefore, if in assigning, for example, the respective functions of Scripture criticism and systematic theology, we shall so explain the difference between these and the bearing of the one upon the other, that in the terms of our definition it may be said that we are attempting to give forth the metaphysics of Scripture criticism and the metaphysics of systematic theology. This is not the time, however, for dwelling upon these subjects, nor shall we offer now to present you with more than one theme under the head of preliminary metaphysics—we mean the distinction between the ontology and deontology of our science—a theme which we have already expounded and expatiated on under the more familiar title of the distinction between the objects of theology and the ethics of theology.*

6. I trust that a few sentences will suffice to make palpable what the distinction is. The difference between an ethical and what may be termed an objective proposition in theology, must be quite obvious. The greatest object in theology is God; and the proposition that God is, is an objective one—while the proposition that we, the creatures of His hand, owe to Him, our Creator, all love and service, is an ethical proposition. In like manner, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is an object; and that He exists, is one of the greatest of those objective truths which are presented to us in the theology of Scripture; while that from

* See Natural Theology, Book I. chap. i.

us, His redeemed, are due to Him, our Redeemer, the grateful homage of our whole hearts, the dedication of all we have and all we are to His will, stands forth in the ethical system of the New Testament as one of the greatest of all moral obligations. The distinction is in every way as real as that which obtains in natural philosophy between the mathematics of the science and the objects of the science. All that is mathematical in this science would be true, although the universe were desolated of its matter, and no bodies existed between which lines could be drawn, either to compose actual solids or to present actual surfaces for the contemplation of the geometer. With but the conceivable lines and surfaces and solids of empty space, geometry would still remain as stable a science, and with all its propositions as entire and irrefragable as ever. And it is precisely thus that the ethics of theology are separable, and might be viewed apart from the objects of theology—the moral relations, or rather the moral proprieties grounded on those relations, abiding unchangeable, whether they have been suggested by the thought of only conceivable beings, or by the sight and knowledge of actual beings, to give them a substantial and living exemplification. But to complete our idea of this distinction, it must be added that facts or events are existences, as well as what are properly termed objects—the fact that God created the world, as well as God himself viewed as the object of our contemplation ; the event that Christ died for our sins, as well as Christ himself viewed in like manner as an object of contemplation. When we speak, then, of the distinction between the objects and the ethics of theology, we extend the meaning of the term *objects* beyond its usual acceptation—making it comprehensive of historical events, as well as of substantive beings—whatever, in short, of theology that comes within the category of *quid est*, in contradistinction to which we place the ethics of theology as comprehensive of all that comes within the category of *quid oportet*. With these explanations, there should be no difficulty in apprehending the distinction between the ontology of the science and the deontology of the science.

7. Now, though not aware that this distinction has ever been adverted to, or far less made use of by former theologians, we cannot but regard it as one of prime importance in the science of theology. The whole peculiarity of the science, in fact, may be said to lie in its objects—for its ethics are essentially the same with those which are in busy play and exercise amid the

familiar relations of human society. The duty which we owe to God is the same in kind, though immeasurably greater and higher in degree than that which we owe to an earthly benefactor. But the truth that God is, is as essentially distinct from the truth that man is, as any information respecting the existence of one being is distinct from the information that there exists another and a wholly different being. In ascending from the visible platform of things before and around us, to the contemplation of heavenly and Divine things, we do not ascend to a different ethics, but we ascend to a different set of objects from before. And the ethics are not more distinct from the objects than the respective faculties of our nature are by which we take cognizance of these—the one being the faculty of observation, by which we come at the knowledge of existences; and the other the moral faculty, by which we obtain the knowledge of duties. But for the various applications which might be made of this distinction, we must refer to our separate treatise on Natural Theology.

8. Each science has its own individual objects, which it classifies according to certain relations and resemblances. The individual objects of metaphysics are the sciences—of which therefore it may be said that the office is to classify *on a large scale* all the objects of human knowledge; because not taking cognizance of these, till the sciences had previously grouped them into very extensive genera, in the contemplation whereof it has to deal with wider and larger generalizations than any of them. If each science be regarded as the general over its own individuals—then metaphysics, as being general over the sciences, may be regarded as the generalissimo over all knowledge. After that each science had appropriated and is now cultivating its own section, the proper office of metaphysics is to form the sections into provinces, and the provinces into one vast empire or territory of human thought. Now it could scarcely be thus employed, that is, in assigning the objective relations between the different branches of human knowledge, without adverting to the different mental powers that are called forth in the prosecution of each of them. In other words, it naturally behoved to have been thrown back, or in a reflex direction, from such a consideration of the objects of knowledge to the consideration of the knowing faculties. It is this, we believe, which in the progress of speculation has caused such a merging of the metaphysical into the mental philosophy. And so this meta-

physics, this *scientia scientiarum*, whose proper office it is to ordain the place and the boundaries of all, has come down from her high superintendence, and in taking account of the powers and processes of the mind, given herself with almost exclusive care to the work and labour of but one of the sciences.

9. For, in truth, the science of mind is as distinct from metaphysics as are any other of the sciences. Mind is the subject of certain phenomena, even as matter is. These phenomena are cognizable just as the others are, by observation—only by a different instrument of observation, by consciousness instead of sense, and which has been well called the faculty of internal observation. All its phenomena of the same kind are reducible to laws, and by the very process of generalization which leads to the discovery and announcement of the laws of the material universe. In a word, mind, as belonging to the category of the *quid est*, or to the order of existences, presents us with both the objects and the events which are included in this category, with an object of contemplation in its own properties and substantive being, and with a succession of events, in the various states of thinking and feeling and willing through which it passes. In other words, mind, like every other existent thing, has a nature or physiology of its own, the investigation of which is a physical investigation; and so Dr. Thomas Brown tells us, and tells us rightly, of the physics of the mind, of both the facts and the laws of the mental physiology—a science which stands as separately out from metaphysics as do any of the physical sciences in the department of the material world.

10. And this is not the only instance in which the mental has been blended most inappropriately, and therefore most injuriously—for what can injure true philosophy more than a confounding of the things which differ, or of certain of the sciences with other sciences? Surely to tell what is right and what is wrong is one thing; and to tell what are the facts or phenomena, and from these what are the laws of mind, is another —yet have the mental and the moral been amalgamated into one; and so the ethical professor must lay down his map of the human faculties ere he will enter on the proper, or rather the only business of his chair, which is the philosophy of duty. In like manner, he who tells us what is good or bad in argument, is employed on a different subject altogether from him who tells us of the properties or processes of mind; and yet the logical

professor will often think it incumbent to take a walking survey over the whole territory of mind, ere he enters on the work of his own proper calling, which is the act of ratiocination. These colleagues, when they thus expatiate, it may well be said, are each of them walking abroad—for certain it is that each has ventured forth beyond his own premises; and sometimes when they do meet in this outer field, which they have converted into a sort of common, it is not always on the most friendly and harmonious terms—for it has been known that with adverse mental theories they, to the great edification of their scholars, have actually fallen out by the way. The way to save this conflict—and could I command but an infinitesimal of the millions expended on war or luxury, it should be done—were to endow a complete university, where, keeping each professor within the limits of his own *peculium*, I would erect a separate chair for the mental physiology, or for the science of mind, viewed as the subject of certain processes and phenomena, which fall within the domain of observational truth, and have really no more to do with the question of what is sound in argument, or sound in morals either, than of what is sound or demonstrative in algebra. And what is more, I should not look on this living encyclopædia of chairs and professorships as fully consummated unless, besides those of logic and ethics and the mental physiology, there was one of metaphysics to the bargain—the proper and distinct office of which is to take cognizance of the characteristic peculiarities, and the connecting relations both of these and of all other sciences.

11. We are nearly done with these generalities—now that you must understand the reason why, in the title of this chapter, we have added to preliminary metaphysics, preliminary mental physics. The real distinction between these we take for granted must by this time be quite palpable; and let us now therefore point out certain things in the working and procedure of the human faculties, which are of fit and useful cognizance at the outset of your theological studies.

12. The first doctrine in the mental physiology which I would select for consideration is, the dependence of the attention on the will. We do not need to perform the analysis by which this has been conclusively established, and for which we refer more especially to Dr. Thomas Brown. It is a fact which, even though it had never been dealt with scientifically, we should have been entitled to proceed upon in the treatment of our own

questions. It is manifest to the familiar experience of every one, that at the bidding of our own will, we may turn our attention to one object of thought, and withdraw it from another. Doubtless there are topics which, on the moment of their being presented, will force themselves upon our attention without any distinct or sensible effort upon our part. It is not the less true, however, that the will has a command over the exercises of this faculty; and we are often conscious of the volition by which, as if by a word of command, the attention is given to one thing, and taken off from another. But for this there could be no just anger felt at the misunderstandings or misapprehensions of other men. Nothing is the legitimate object of anger which is not wilful. We often feel anger at the mistakes of our fellows; but it is not a rightful anger, unless the mistake could have been avoided, had the party chosen to attend to the matter in question. The mere intellectual error or perversity of another, we ought not to be angry at, if it proceed altogether from the constitution of his intellect, or from the circumstances by which he is surrounded. The understanding is not the proper object of a resentful feeling for any of its acts, but the will is.

13. And it is thus, and thus alone, that opinion comes within the scope of a moral reckoning; or to express it otherwise, that man is responsible for his belief. The ethical principle which has been already stated by us, that nothing is virtuous or vicious which is not voluntary, is that for any act to be susceptible of a moral designation, it must have originated or had its consent in the will—is the essential element in this question. After this, we have only to determine the part which the will has in the conclusions of the understanding. That there can be no belief without evidence, is just as true as that there can be no vision without a visible object, and light to behold it in. But to work the belief, it is not enough that the evidence be presented—it must also be perceived, which it may never be unless it is attended to. The final act of belief may be as much the necessary or organic result of the evidence at the time within the mind's contemplation, as the picture on the retina of the eye is the organic result of all the light which falls upon it from an external object. The will may have nothing to do at this last step of the process, and yet have had much to do at the previous steps of it; in the one case when *attending* to the evidence which never could have been perceived, unless brought by the exercise of this faculty within the sphere of observation; in the

other, when *looking* to the visible object which it were impossible to see, had the spectator chosen to turn away from it, or to shut his eyes.

14. Let us apply this at once to Christianity. Should a message stamped with the likelihood of having come from an earthly friend be brought to our door; and still more, should it bear not the pretension only but the aspect of having come from the best and highest friend of all, our Father in heaven—then to turn away from it, and to refuse the examination, both of its credentials and its subject-matter, might be to risk our landing in a state of unbelief, which not only in itself is intellectually, but which when viewed in connexion with the antecedent volition which gave it birth, is morally wrong. It is not the incompetency of all the evidence we saw to work conviction that will justify our want of it. What we have to be reckoned with for, is our inattention to those premonitory signals which, if they did not bear this evidence fully and legibly inscribed upon them, at least pointed out the quarter where it lay; and which, had we explored, might have brought us within the observation of what we did not see, because we would not seek after. We see not, because we care not. We have fallen short of belief, not, for aught we know, from the want of evidence, but clearly in our case, whatever the evidence, from the want of an attention that we chose not to bestow. It is this precisely which makes the unbelief criminal, and affixes a moral characteristic to our intellectual state. It is on this ground that our Saviour himself pronounces on the culpability of unbelief, and resolves it into the evil state of men's affections, and that again into the evil of their doings. The condemnation of it is, that men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (John iii. 19.) And that they searched not the Scriptures, because not willing to come to Christ that they might have life. (John v. 39, 40.) Let a professed message from the upper sanctuary have but the verisimilitude of this high claim; and this confers upon it the real and rightful claim, if not of being forthwith believed, at least of being forthwith inquired into. To regard it with neglect, even at this initial stage, is to incur the tremendous hazard of having neglected a great salvation—because the hazard of a wilful, and therefore a criminal, ignorance of such doctrines as God wills us to believe for our everlasting peace, of such precepts as He wills us to perform for the habits and the services and the enjoyments of an everlasting blessedness in

heaven. It is the office of attention, as the intermediate link which connects the moral and intellectual departments of our nature, or as the ligament which binds them—that explains how the state of our convictions may often be the fit subject of a judicial cognizance; and how, resolvable as it may often be into an indifferency to God and to His will, it may become the matter of our most emphatic condemnation.*

15. And what is true of the intellectual is to a great extent true also of what may be called the emotional states of the mind. If belief be the necessary or the organic result of the evidence wherein we see any given object of contemplation, emotion may be as much the necessary or the organic result of those characteristics which belong to it, and which are present at the time to the mind of the observer. When he looks to a landscape spread out before him, he might no more help the sense that he has of its beauty than the sense that he has of its reality. When he thinks of the kindness of a friend, the consequent gratitude may come as much unbidden into his heart as does the conviction that he exists into his understanding. And so of the recoil which is felt at the sight of some loathsome creature, which may be as little a thing of will, and as much a thing of physical constitution, as is the sensation which its colour impresses on the retina of the eye. How then is it that we become responsible for our emotions—for our desires and our aversions and our resentments, and our various other mental susceptibilities, which seem to be no more things of choice than the felt taste of any given food when brought into contact with our palates, or the felt heat of the fire when we approach our hands to it?

16. The responsibility of man for his emotions is made out in the same way that the responsibility for his belief is. It is true that he cannot bid *immediately* the required love into his heart, or bid away from it the denounced and forbidden hatred. But what he cannot do immediately, he can do mediately. He cannot will the emotions so as that at the mere word of command they shall arise in his heart at any given instant; but he can summon to the presence of his mind their counterpart objects, which may then work their appropriate influence upon his feelings. He can give his attention to one set of objects, and force it away from another. In short, the objects are the instru-

* Man's responsibility for his belief resolves itself into responsibility for the direction of his attention, of which faculty the human will is the commander and regulator.—2 Thess. ii. 10, 12; Isa. i. 3; Heb. ii. 1-3; Ps. cxix. 9.

ments he works by, when he wants either to awaken or preserve in his bosom their correspondent feelings; and attention is the faculty by which he keeps his hold of these instruments, and brings them to bear on the subjective mind, so as to put their own proper impress on the sensibilities of our nature. I can think of God's love to me in Christ Jesus; and if I think believingly, my heart will be thereby warmed into the love of God back again. Or my mind can cease from thinking of the injury that would excite me to revenge, when my heart will cease from its fierce and fiery agitations. Even should it be impossible to view with the love of moral complacency the enemy who has done me wrong—still, by looking in another direction, by shifting my regards from his character to his state, I might view him with the love of compassion—nay, with the love of kindness: And as I dwell in thought on the certainty of his coming death, and the possibility of its unrepentant horrors—instead of resenting the injustice of his short-lived triumph, I may be led to pity and to pray for him. And thus it is that attention, or consideration, or reflection, which, term it as we may, is an intellectual exercise under the will's control, and for which, therefore, we are liable to be judicially dealt with—is so mighty as an implement of culture, whether in the natural school of morality for the discipline of the heart, or for the lessons of spiritual and experimental Christianity in the school of the gospel.*

17. This law of the mental physiology, this relation between the understanding and the heart, or between the objects of an intellectual contemplation, and the emotions which are excited thereby, is of the utmost theological importance, and evinces a most beautiful and beneficial harmony between the constitution of the human mind and the doctrines of the Christian revelation. We might have extended the operation of the law to the appetites as well as the emotions—for though it be not the thought of food which calls forth hunger, or of water which calls forth thirst, certain it is that the appetency for an intoxicating beverage may in this way be whetted and fomented; and that we must turn away our sight and eyes from viewing vanity, as well as our thoughts from the very imagination of it, in order to shake off the most hurtful and degrading of those passions which war against the soul. This only gives a wider generality to the statement, that the intellect must be rightly occupied in order to

* The responsibility of man for his emotions is resolvable into the same principle with his responsibility for his belief.—Rev. xxii. 15; Col. iii. 5.

right affections or right desires of any sort having practically the dominion over us. We shall thus understand the place of ascendency, or of presiding guardianship and command, which is assigned to faith in the moral dynamics of the New Testament; and will recognise the sound philosophy as well as scriptural authority of such sayings as "sanctified by faith," "renewed in knowledge," "living a life of faith on the Son of God," "sanctified by the truth," "walking in the truth,"—regenerated by the power of it, or "born again by the incorruptible seed of the word," receiving power to become new creatures, or to become the sons of God through the operation of our belief in Christ Jesus. There is no man deeply read in the philosophy of our nature, if he but make a study of our present lesson, who will not perceive of this belief that it is the turning-point of a new character, as well as of a new condition and new prospects —that there must be a moral along with the intellectual change; and that if in virtue of the one he be indeed translated out of darkness into marvellous light, then as the sure and unfailing consequence, in virtue of the other, he will be translated from the spirit of bondage and fear into love and liberty, and the generous inspiration of all goodness. It is thus that the most effectual preachers of faith are also the most effectual preachers of righteousness; and such is the sure concatenation between the enlightenment of the understanding and enlargement of the heart, that, let a man but know God as a Friend and reconciled Father, and from that moment he is on firm vantage-ground for the services of a grateful and willing obedience.*

18. The next law of the mental physiology that we recommend for special consideration to the theological student, is the law of habit. There are certain of its applications so very obvious that we need scarcely advert to them—as in the business of the pulpit, when employed by the preacher for giving emphasis and urgency to his calls of immediate repentance—seeing that every day of perseverance in the spirit and ways of ungodliness strengthens the inveteracy of this natural and universal disease, and makes the moral recovery of those on whom all this earnestness is thrown away still more hopeless and impracticable than before. At present we view it more as the indication of a natural regimen, the establishment of which seems to evince the purposes

* Habitual and believing attention to the objective truths of Christianity is the great instrument of bringing the mind into right subjective states.—1 John iv. 10, 16, 19; Jude 20, 21; Gal. ii. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 2; John xvii. 17; 2 Cor. iii. 18.

of Him who is at once the Creator and Governor of men, or what may be termed the policy of the divine administration. To explain our meaning, it is not required that we shall enter on the analysis or philosophy of habit; for any conclusion which we mean now to offer is grounded on the most palpable of its phenomena—which are, first, the increasing facility of virtue to those who resolutely, and in the face of every temptation, keep by its lessons and its laws; and secondly, the more prone and headlong tendency, aggravated and confirmed at length into the helpless necessity of sinning on the part of those who, given to self-indulgence, become the votaries of disobedience and vice. It is not of any reward for the one or punishment for the other coming *ab extra* that we now speak—of a local heaven, teeming with the means of enjoyment, or a local hell, where pains and sufferings are inflicted as the wages of iniquity. We speak of the effect which virtue and vice respectively have on the mind and character of their respective followers, in that they tend so to fix and establish their own influence over them, that after a time they who have been righteous are righteous still, or they who have been unjust and unholy are unjust and unholy still. It is of this subjective operation only that I am now speaking, and not of any other doom than the unchangeable moral doom which awaits the good and the evil. Men live long enough to see the exemplification of it even in this world, though perhaps it was greatly more patent in antediluvian times, though only realized there on one side of the picture, when the period of discipline extended to nearly a thousand years; and, as if in conformity with this, we read that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, which was corrupt and full of violence; and also, as if to restrain our species from ever rising here, at least to such heights of irreclaimable profligacy, the natural life was shortened to a hundred and twenty years by Him whose Spirit would no longer strive with men, now advanced to a wickedness more enormous than could be any longer tolerated in the world.

19. This view might afford even to natural theology the glimpse of our coming futurity in another state of being. Suppose that there had been no death, but that an immortality on earth had been alike stamped on two different societies—one of the virtuous and another of the profligate among mankind—the one ripening and expanding and confirming more and more every age towards the perfection of moral excellence, and the other in like manner towards the perfection, if we may so call it, of moral

depravity—till the certainty of each abiding by its own specific and now fixed character, had become absolute and irrevocable. Had such been the arrangement, that terrestrial pandemonium which was realized before the flood would have been perpetual, and every new cycle of time would have brought an accession to its atrocities and its horrors. Now, to conceive of this as the real immortality which is in reserve for the wicked, we have only to imagine that they bear the identical habits and tendencies of their present life across the grave with them to the place of their everlasting destination. We speak not now of their physical condition in respect of pain or pleasure there, but of their moral character in respect of worth or wickedness there; and it does afford, even apart from revelation, a dubious, it may be, but still a likely perspective of the final issue of things—when, on the side of the upright, we shall behold an indefinite ascent in the ethereal heights, which never terminate, both of greater holiness and greater love; and, on the side of the reprobate, an always deepening hue of fouler depravity, of more fell malignity and defiance and rebellious hatred and hardihood than before. This were but the continuance or further development of a progression now before our eyes; and as such not improbable, even with no other lights to guide us than those of naked and unassisted theism—certainly strengthened, however, by the intimations of Scripture.*

20. And there is a harmony altogether worthy of observation between the law of habit, which forms part of the natural economy of the human spirit, and a certain part or process in the revealed economy of the gospel. In virtue of the former, let there to-day be a struggle between temptation and the sense of duty; and should conscience, or this sense of duty, be overborne, then on the morrow conscience will offer a feebler resistance than before, and so temptation, still surer of the mastery, will at every renewal of the assault, speed onward with all the greater certainty, and effect the work of moral deterioration. Now, in keeping with this, we are told in the Bible that it is the Spirit of God who operates on the spirit of man, to stimulate both his aspirations after all that is good, and his resistance to all that is

* The tendency of moral qualities to fix and perpetuate themselves in the character, till the wickedness or the goodness be so far confirmed as to be irrecoverable: the miseries of the one and delights of the other may form the main ingredients of the eternal wretchedness or felicity in a future state.—Rev. xxii. 11; Gal. vi. 7, 8; Prov. i. 31; xi. 30; Rom. xiv. 17.

evil. Let us imagine, then, that instead of complying with the suggestion of this heavenly visitant, we stifle and withstand it; then the distinct intimation of Scripture is, that the Spirit is grieved by such a treatment—that He is alienated more and more the longer we persevere in this neglect of Him and of His warnings—that He at length ceases to strive, and all His influences for good are withdrawn from a heart within which they had so often sought a lodgement, and as often been quenched and extinguished. And so at last grace gives up the contest with nature—leaving it to the wild misrule of its own unchecked propensities, that it may be filled with the fruit of its own ways. It is thus that in the moral history of every unrepentant sinner, these two laws—the law of habit, and the law of the Spirit of God—fit in as it were to each other, and act conspiringly together towards the same fearful result—a creature abandoned to itself, and left without any counteractive influence to stay or to mitigate those evil passions which had been fostered through life; and which, with all the tenacity of an undying worm, will cleave to him as their prey and their victim through eternity.*

21. But ere that we have finished this contemplation, we must have recourse to another law of the mental physiology. We have already seen that the affections of our nature, whether good or evil, are strengthened by indulgence, till at length, through the operation of habit, they become the fixed and irreversible principles of our character, with full ascendency over us. Now, couple with the force of this moral necessity the undoubted fact of the happiness, the inherent and essential happiness, which lies in the exercise of our good affections; and the wretchedness alike inherent of every spirit that is corroded or tempest-driven by the venom or violence of bad ones—and out of these elements alone both a heaven and a hell can be imagined, where either virtue is its own reward, or vice its own self-tormentor through eternity. We dispute not the possibility or even the likelihood of other ingredients—of the physical delights and gratifications which a beneficent Father might shower down among the habitations of the righteous; of the physical discomforts and agonies which are ministered in ceaseless vengeance throughout the region of the ungodly. But there lies a great theological lesson, not only in

* In harmony with the law of habit is, generally speaking, the method of the Spirit's dealing with men: withdrawn from those who resist Him, given in larger measure to those who obey Him.—Acts v. 32; Mark iv. 25; Eph. iv. 30; 1 Thess. v. 19; Gen. vi. 3; 1 John v. 16.

the effect of repeated acts to stamp a perpetual character, but in the effect of character alone and of itself, on our state of enjoyment—whether we look, on the one hand, to the heart's ease, the complacency, the oil of gladness, the thousand pleasurable sensations attendant on the love of God and the happy consciousness of His favour, the sweets of charity between man and man, and, along with the sunshine of their mutual confidence, the play of those mutual sympathies which act and react, when gratitude and good-will come together, in cordial and confiding fellowship; or, in contrast with these, the reverse influences of a distempered morale, when envy, and suspicion, and hatred, and discontent fret and tumultuate in every bosom, and ever and anon break forth in storms of fiercest controversy—where all is darkness above them, among creatures thus living in the state of defiance to an angry God, and all is moral anarchy around them, among these same creatures fired with licentious or vindictive passions against each other. There is, we say, a lesson of soundest theology to be gathered from such a contemplation. It demonstrates of how little avail justification were for the happiness of our eternity if not accompanied by sanctification. It tells us that though the righteousness of Christ were made judicially ours, so as to invest us with a full and valid title of entry into heaven, yet our salvation is incomplete unless the graces of His character become personally ours, so as to qualify us for heaven's exercises and heaven's joys. The gospel has not broken up the connexion between love and enjoyment on the one hand, between hatred and misery on the other. These abide the unrepealed, the invariable sequences of our spiritual economy—so that to make good the happiness of heaven, it is as indispensable as ever that we acquire the spirit and the character of heaven. This we know from the distinct and repeated averments of holy writ; but it is well that on the foundation of mental science we can raise another invincible barrier against the errors of Antinomianism.

22. To obey God is followed up by the greater facility of obedience—to sin against Him is followed up by the greater necessity of sinning. In the one case we become every day more proficient and accomplished than before, as the scholars of righteousness—in the other, more helpless and degraded than before, as the slaves of iniquity. This might well be called a regimen of moral rewards and moral penalties; and when we join with it the consideration that virtue has its own native

pleasures, and vice its own native disquietudes and pains, then do we behold in the spirit of man, constituted as he is, a self-working mechanism by which the sanctions of law are executed, and the government of a holy Lawgiver is upholden. Under such a discipline as this, which is in perfect analogy with all that passes before us, we might see in the eternity of hell torments—not, as has been represented by the enemies of the Christian faith, a monstrous disproportion between the punishment and the crime—not a wretchedness that never ends in return for the wickedness of a brief and ephemeral lifetime—but we see a wickedness confirmed and unrepented of here carried with all its acquired tendencies and habits across the grave, and perpetuating itself there in new and multiplied and ever-recurring transgressions. The sufferings are bound up with the sins; and the one is eternal just because the other is eternal. The creature suffers everlastingly just because he sins everlastingly; and in his awful destiny we behold, not an endurance that never ends in remuneration for the offences of a few years, but the continued operation of that law by which sin and suffering do constantly follow each other, whether in the present or in a future state of existence. It is not because we like to indulge in a cold-blooded speculation that we give forth this argument; but because of its urgent and immediate bearing on practical Christianity—seeing that it would slacken the operation of every motive to flee from the coming wrath, if men were untaught the lesson that now or never was the alternative on which their eternity was suspended; and that in striving to be right and religious here, they in truth were striving for their all.

23. Many other applications of the mental physiology might be adduced, and of its service in conducting to a right and a wise deliverance on theological questions. At present, however, we shall give but one specimen more, and which we select as among the best of these adaptations. We are indebted for it to the admirable sagacity of Bishop Butler, who first distinguished between each of the special affections and that more general affection which is the love of self; and then pointed out the difference between what he calls the terminating object of a special affection, and that accompanying pleasure which is felt in the indulgence of it. Take compassion for an example of this. The proper object of this affection is the relief of misery, in the fulfilment of which object it rests and terminates. It is obvious that the more intense the compassion is, the more intently will

it be set upon its object, to the exclusion for the time being of everything else from the mind—having all its regards monopolized, as it were, by the wretchedness which is before it, and actuated by no other desire at the moment than that of doing it away. It is thus that he demonstrates the disinterested character of this, and indeed of every special affection whatever—it being quite clear of every such affection, that it is wholly distinct from the love of self; and that the stronger it is, the mind is all the more thoroughly engrossed with its own proper object, and so more away from the consideration of self, the gratification of which, or the advantage of which, forms no part at the time of its aim or of its thoughts. And yet this does not hinder, but that in the indulgence of this affection there might, and indeed from the very nature of affections we think that there must be, an accompanying pleasure. Nay, the stronger the affection, the greater must be the pleasure. And yet it is not this pleasure that the mind is looking to, or laying itself out for; but, recurring to our example, it looks to another's wretchedness alone, and lays itself out for the relief of that wretchedness alone. This has been most felicitously illustrated by Butler from the appetite of hunger—the proper object of which in the use of food is relief from its own cravings, not the pleasure of eating. And as of this appetite, so of every special affection. The object to which it seeks, and in which it finds its rest and its complacent gratification, is altogether distinct from the complacency itself, or from the enjoyment which accompanies the gratification. This enjoyment, though felt by self, is not the thing aimed at by self; and though incidental to every special affection, yet is it but an accessory or collateral, and as distinct from the object of the affection, as the way to a landing-place is distinct from the landing-place. This may appear a subtle, but is a most sound and substantial distinction notwithstanding; and of the very greatest use, particularly in ethical science, where it cuts up by the roots both the selfish and the utilitarian systems of morality.

24. But it is of value in theology also—more particularly in enabling us to adjust a question which has been raised about the disinterested love of God. Every special affection, in fact, may be said to be disinterested—and that in respect of its having a distinct object of its own, separate from the good or the advantage of self, the love we bear to which being properly the only selfish affection of our nature. In this sense, the ravenous

appetite for intoxicating liquors, when looked to philosophically, is just as disinterested as is the urgent feeling of compassion—both of them being set on distinct objects of their own; and neither of them certainly having the good of self for its aim, which properly and scientifically is the alone interested pursuit whereof the mind is capable. And it is just so of our love to God. There is pleasure in the exercise of this special affection as in every other; but this pleasure is only the accompaniment of the affection and not its object—the mind in the act of its indulgence being wholly away from self and wholly set upon God, or upon the graces and glories of His character. Notwithstanding then of the accompanying pleasure, it is still a disinterested affection—nay, the greater the pleasure the more disinterested it is—this pleasure, it is clear, being in porportion to the strength of the affection, which strength of affection insures that the mind at the time of its exercise is all the more intently set upon its object, and all the more away from any reflex or subjective regards upon itself. Altogether, it may be said to form an exquisite principle in the constitution of the mind, that when indulging a special affection, then in very proportion as its own enjoyment is less in its thoughts, or less the object of its desire, because then engrossed with wholly another object, the greater is that enjoyment. We are not denying that the love of self is a legitimate affection, far more than very many of the special affections which could be named: we are only saying, be they good or evil, they are all of them distinct from the love of self, and that although each ministers to the gratification of self, in the act and at the time of its own gratification. One's own happiness, which is the proper object of self-love, is a fair and right object of pursuit and calculation. Our Saviour on earth served and suffered for the joy that was set before Him; yet is it nevertheless true, that the highest of our joys in heaven never can be reached but through a disinterested medium—the love of God for Himself—the love of holiness for its own sake.*

* Every special affection is distinct from the love of self, and the pleasure which accompanies the indulgence of such is distinct from the object in which it terminates.—Heb. xii. 2; Matt. xix. 19; xxii. 37.

CHAPTER III.

ON CERTAIN INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS PRESENT TO EVERY MIND, AND WHICH LAY THE OBLIGATION UPON ALL OF GIVING TO RELIGION THEIR SERIOUS ENTERTAINMENT.

1. But far the most important lesson in the science of the mental physiology is the supremacy of conscience—the discovery also of Bishop Butler, or at least first given forth by him in clear and formal announcement for the benefit of the world. Yet we have reserved it for our present chapter, because we hold this law to be the real orginator of certain moral forces which operate in every mind, and give it the first impulses towards any earnest thought or inquiry after God.

2. We do not think it necessary to expound here this great principle, which Butler has set forth with so much perspicuity and philosophical precision. Let me refer you therefore to the three first of his famous fifteen sermons, all of which are worthy of being most seriously pondered by the theological student; and whereof those now specially recommended are capable, we think, of being so used and applied as to give him a most commanding position at the outset of his professional studies. A few of these applications it shall now be our endeavour to unfold.

3. The sense of right and wrong is universal in our species. This moral faculty has been termed a voice within us; and if so, there is no speech nor language where the voice is not heard. The evidence for a universal conscience throughout the human family is to be found in the vocables of all nations; and could so very extensive an induction be made, might be found piecemeal, and with no exception, by successive acts of distinct individual converse, save in the cases of infancy and idiotism, wherever man or woman was to be met with. Certain it is, that missionaries, whose field of enterprise is the whole earth, even to its most remote and savage lands, when they speak (and it is among their first and earliest themes) of good and evil in the sense of what ought and what ought not to be done, they do not startle the natives as if by the utterance of things unknown, but meet with the full sympathy at least of their understandings, or with the response of a ready intelligence everywhere. There is, as part and parcel of their mental constitution, a judgment of what

is right and what is wrong in every bosom, though we do not contend for the absolute uniformity of these judgments. Our concern at present is with the faculty, or judge in every breast —and that whether or not there be a perfect identity in the verdicts which are severally given forth by them. We hear much of the diversities in their moral estimate of the same thing, which obtain among the people of different countries and ages. It is not essential to any reasoning of ours that we should now attempt any explanation or adjustment of these diversities. We believe it to be a semblance, and little more; and that on the application of right tests for the determination of this matter, it will be found that the same iniquities are condemned, and that goodness and truth and honesty are justified and held in reverence all the world over.

4. But it is not with the lessons of conscience that we at present have to do, or with the uniformity of these lessons. It is of the authority wherewith they are given forth that we now speak —an authority felt by all to be rightful, whether deferred to in practice or not. It may not be the habit of all men to obey conscience; but it is the sentiment of all men that conscience ought to be obeyed. This is necessarily involved in the very idea of conscience—its precise function being to take cognizance of the right and the wrong—of the *ought* and the *ought not*. The supremacy of conscience may be regarded therefore as an identical proposition. To say that it is right to obey conscience, is but to say that it is right to do what is right. The faculty, then, which thus tells of the right and the wrong, is in its very nature the master faculty of the mind. When it speaks, it must, from the office which essentially belongs to it, be with the voice of one having authority—standing as it does from the lessons in which it deals, with the right and in the relation of a superior over all the other desires and faculties of our nature—and being not the teacher only, but the commander of righteousness. Her part is that of lawgiver to the mind, and that whether we perform our part or not of obedience to her laws. Her right is not abrogated by our rebellion, any more than the government of a nation is cast down from its legitimacy, though cast down from executive power in the anarchy of the state, or by the lawless insurrection of its subjects. This is the supremacy of conscience, as first expounded by Bishop Butler. Whether she be sovereign *de facto* or not, she is sovereign *de jure*, and, as such, recognised and read of all men.

5. This, then, is the faculty which each man feels to be striving within him—a judge within the breast; and to make the impression more complete, with the power too of summary execution, both for the dispensation of rewards and the infliction of penalties—an instant complacency in the act of well-doing, the bitterness of remorse in the retrospect of evil. It may be difficult to estimate the strength of argument for a God in this phenomenon of a universal conscience, the supremacy whereof is felt by all men; but it is not difficult to imagine what thoughts, what apprehensions, it will suggest to each man. The feeling of a judge within him will not fail to be associated in his mind with the idea of a judge over him, in the shape of an impression at least if not of an inference. We do not speak of what might logically be made of this phenomenon, or how much a reasoner might tell him to believe because of it. We speak of that which passes singly and spontaneously in the homestead of the man's own thoughts—or what it is that, with the constant presence of such a monitor, his spirit will at times conjure up in its own solitary workings, and apart from communion with all his fellows. We speak of that which takes place in the cell of his own feelings, and his own cogitations; and affirm of every man, that, exercised and lessoned by these, he cannot make escape at least from the notion of a God. I will not say at present whether these must give him the belief, but they will at least give him the conception of a God. If not convinced of Him, he will at all events conceive of Him. It is in virtue of this ever busy and ever whispering conscience within him, if there be not the certainty, not even the probability, there will at the very least be the imagination of a God. It is this faculty, in truth, with its ever recurring instigations, which gives to humanity its strongest sense of a God. Apart from revelation, it is the theology of conscience, and not the theology of academic demonstration, which originated or upholds religion in the world. It is because of this part or peculiarity in our mental constitution that we have a popular theology anywhere, nor can we explain it otherwise than by the universality of such a constitution that we have a popular theology everywhere. This tallies at all points with the experience of missionaries. They may make utterance of God with as much freedom in the ear of the rudest savages as they do of right and wrong; and the theological is not more strange to their hearers than is the ethical conception. The two conceptions, in fact, seem to be

intimately blended in every bosom, insomuch that we are not sensible of the inference which conducts by one step from the feeling of a supreme conscience within, to the notion of a supreme God who is above and over us.

6. And here let me intimate once for all, that I have no confidence even in the general doctrine of innate ideas, and can see no evidence for the human mind having the innate idea, and far less the innate conviction of a God. We cannot enter into the reasonings, or rather the strenuous asseverations, of Fénélon and others on the subject of what may be termed an instinctive or intuitive theism. We think that the universality of the notion, and the want of all sensible reasoning which could have led to it, might be otherwise accounted for; and that the account is just to be found in the felt supremacy of conscience. Such is the rapidity of our mental processes when often repeated so as to have become familiar, that a process of but one step, though in reality an inference, may well pass for an intuition; and thus may it fare with man when he reasons from his conscience to his God. The transition from the one term to the other may have been too quick to be noticed by him; and thus it may happen that what he really sees through the medium of an argument, he may think that he sees by an immediate perception of the mind. We speak ambiguously on the subject, as we should like to do of everything that is either too distant or too minute for observation. I cannot tell of the infinitesimals that are beyond my eyesight, and have not yet been brought up to vision by microscopes of greatest power; and yet far beneath this limit there is room for many a world of wonders, of which, however, it is my soundest philosophy to say that I do not know, and therefore cannot tell. And there are infinitesimals in time as well as space, among which I am unable to distinguish between the instant and the successive; or, when the question is of mind and its phenomena, to fetch up the secrets which lie in its hidden region of littles, so hidden as to be a region of invisibles—and thus tell which is the intuition, or which is the rapid inference that flashed with lightning speed from premises to conclusion. There is a *ne plus ultra* beneath which, or on the other side of which, we must submit to be ignorant; and therefore though we will not deny, we are as little willing to affirm, that man has an intuitive sense of Deity—more especially as in the felt supremacy of conscience we are presented with at least a likely explanation. Certainly it is not on the basis of

any mystical intuitions—and we only call them mystical because they are unknown—that we shall seek to strengthen any theology of ours. All our preferences are for the definite and the unquestionable; and with the rich abundance in our possession of distinct and satisfactory proofs both for the natural and the Christian theology, we should feel it unpardonable if we led you to associate with either the uncertainty or the haze of any darkling speculation.*

7. But without determining this question, or how the notion of a Deity may have been originated—whether in the shape of a certainty, or a conjecture, or even of a bare conception—enough for our purpose now that this notion exists, be it the fruit of an intuition, or of an inference grounded on the felt stirrings of a conscience within the heart. If in the form of a certainty, then did we but know the will of God as well as His being, it would demand our instant obedience. If in the form of a conjecture, then, let the likelihoods on which the conjecture is founded be strong or weak, they demand an instant inquiry. If even in the least and lowest form of an imagination, then—for there is what may be called a moral counterpart to the mere thought of God—it would demand our solemn and serious entertainment. To the thought of Him alone, and that in all the gradations of it which can be specified, from a passing fancy to a sure and settled conviction, there is a certain duteous response by the mind, which, according as given or withheld, will be a test of character, serving to discriminate between the natural earnestness of one man on the subject, and the natural indifferency or dislike of another—between him who would smother or dismiss the idea on the moment of its presentation before him, and him in whom it awakened not the curiosity alone, but the heartfelt desire to seek after God, if haply he might find Him. In the first chapter of the Romans, where we read of the world's declension into the lowest depths of ungodliness, one of the charges against our degenerating race is, that they liked not to retain God in their knowledge. Now it is the very same charge, for it would mark the same essential impiety, if, after having lost this knowledge, they still persist in liking not to recover it. It is, in truth, the very same phase of disposition or character, that we should like not to recover God to our knowledge as that

* Conscience a universal faculty, and the impression of a God equally so; forming a valid ground for holding religious converse with men all the world over.—Rom. ii. 14, 15; Luke xii. 57; Acts xxiv. 16.

we should like not to retain God in our knowledge. Now the entertainment we give to the mere notion of a God will, in the eye of one who can weigh the secrets of all spirits, decide whether we have this liking or have it not. In other words, there is as much of a rudimental and remaining theology in the world as to make all men the fit subjects of a moral reckoning, and so of being judicially dealt with for their treatment of a God.

8. The whole spirit of ungodliness might be exhibited by one who knows not the certainty of a God, simply if he will not attend to the question of His existence, and cares not to inquire after Him—just as there might be the very essence of ingratitude in my treatment of the anonymous benefactor who, by his secret donation, has raised me from deepest indigence, and given me the comfort and independence of a home, while I take no step—and that because I have no wish—to ascertain him. It is precisely thus that the specific character of irreligion might be exemplified without the evidences of religion having ever been studied or understood—if not by my hatred or disobedience of the God whom I know, at least by my willing ignorance of Him whom I do not know, and in that I seek not and aspire not after the Being who, for aught that I can tell, has called me forth from the chambers of nonentity, and given me place and entertainment in the territory of living men. This principle carries back a responsibility even to the confines of atheism—nay, enters within its limits, and subjects to an account the furthest off whether in darkness or in scepticism, for their indifference to the question of a God. It does not tell them that in the absence of proofs they ought to have believed; but it does tell them, that with the likelihoods, yea, with but the possibilities of such a Being, they ought to have inquired. There lie here the materials for a reckoning which might be carried round the globe, and so as to bring one and all of the human family within the awards of a judgment-day. It is well to know how far into the region of mental alienation from God the challenging power of religion might be carried; and most satisfactory to understand, that associated even with the faintest glimmerings throughout the transient thought or imagination of a Deity, there is a moral force which should tell upon all consciences, and lead the remotest outcasts of our species to look and long for further indications of Him.

9. And if this be true, even in regard to the *credenda* of natural religion, it is still more palpably true of the Christian faith.

Though we should have no right to demand for it the instant belief, we may have a full right to demand for it the instant attention of all men. It may not, on the first notice, like a visible object seen at a single glance, announce, and all at once, its own verity; but such may be its verisimilitudes, such, if not the proofs, may at least be the precognitions of its trueness, as to challenge, and most rightfully to challenge, our prolonged regards to it. If Christianity have nothing to show at the outset which entitles it to bid our summary and immediate conviction, this, at the very least, can be said of it, that it shows as little, we think infinitely less, to justify our summary rejection of it. There is such an aspect of credibility as fully entitles it to a trial, and enough to convict us of moral unfairness if the trial be not given. All that we insist upon at present is not a favourable verdict, but a hearing; and that we incur the peril of an ignorance or unbelief which might be ruinous if the hearing is not bestowed on it. Should a professed messenger from a distant friend place himself before you, then the more creditable the whole tone and bearing of the man, the greater is your delinquency if, when he offers to put the credentials of his authenticity into your hands, you dismiss him from your presence without the examination of them. And it is precisely thus that, anterior to all examination of its evidences, we might incur the guilt of neglect or contumely towards the Author of our being, just by our heedlessness, and still more by our premature rejection of a professed message from the upper sanctuary—and that not because we have withstood those manifested proofs which should have led us to believe, but because long prior to this we have withstood those incipient premonitions or likelihoods of its truth which should have led us to inquire.

10. And we may here advert to the reasonings of Butler, who, when speaking of an evidence far short of certainty, tells us that probability is the guide of life. And it is true that in the prosecution of our temporal interests, we proceed not on the certainty of an attainment, but on the chance of an attainment—embarking, for example, on many an enterprise, not because we are sure of its object, but because, if meeting with the same good luck, we may succeed as well as some who have gone before us. There is often true wisdom in this—whether to try our fortune in the pursuit of what is good, or to escape a hazard in the avoidance of what is evil. And thus he tells us, that though we had but a probability on the side of religion, it is our highest prudence

to act as if it were absolutely true—so as thereby to secure at least the chance of a blissful, and to shun the risk of a wretched eternity. He, it is to be observed, insists on the prudence of thus dealing with mere probabilities; I insist on the principle of thus dealing with them. He, on the peril we incur by our neglect of them; I, on the guilt that we incur by our neglect of them. It is true that by neglecting these probabilities we might forfeit the good of our eternity, but not unless in this neglect there had been a previous deserving of the forfeiture. And we trust to have made it palpable that there is such a deserving—and especially in our disregard of those likelihoods at first sight, those presumptions however slender, those *prima facie* evidences, which, however slight, as claims on our belief, should have been held all-powerful as claims or calls upon our attention. To have been heedless of a message, even with the faintest plausibility of its being sent from God, is in a measure to have been heedless of God himself; and an entertainment of it is not more a question of highest interest than of highest duty. There is something greatly worse than folly in this reckless unconcern for a professed if at all a likely revelation from heaven. There is in it a culpability of the gravest sort—the criminal indifferency of man to his Maker—the very essence, in truth, of direct and daring impiety.

11. It will now be understood what the principle is on which a minister has a rightful claim upon the attention, and might ply such topics as would give him a powerful hold over the popular conscience, and that in his very first dealings even with a congregation of the most illiterate and depraved hearers. For each has the feeling of a judge within the heart, who tells him of the difference between right and wrong; and each has the counterpart apprehension of a judge over him who takes present cognizance of his doings, and will take future account of their conformity with this law in the heart of every man; and each besides has the consciousness of his own innumerable delinquencies from the rule of righteousness, even in his own sense, and according to his own standard of it; and on such ready-made premises as these, might the voice of a preacher from without, re-echoed to by the voice within, awaken amongst any people both the deepest convictions of guilt, and the dread anticipations of a coming vengeance. It is not necessary for this that there should be the absolute and entire certainty of a God: it is enough if there be but the apprehension of a God. They could not

without violence to the light of their own minds, glimmering and dubious as it is—they could not stifle, we shall not say their own belief, but their own thoughts, their own conceptions of a judge and of a judgment-day. It is thus that at the very outset of his ministrations, will a bearer of the gospel message, in the popular creed and popular conscience alone, meet with a rudimental theology everywhere that should respond to his first appeals and first arguments; and on this, as an initial vantage-ground, might he rear and carry onwards his further demonstrations of the truth as it is in Jesus. How it is that he finds acceptance for these it will be our part to explain, when we deliver our views of the internal evidence for the truth of Christianity. Our present object is to state what the considerations are, not on which we carry the belief, but on which we carry the attention of the people, and dispose them for a serious entertainment of the question. They are such considerations as have been known to constrain, and solemnize, and overawe even the rudest children of nature. It is enough that they be the children of our common humanity, that they might be fit subjects for the overtures of salvation—whether brought to their doors by clergymen within, or by missionaries beyond the limits of Christendom.

12. But though it may be premature to enter yet on the reasons which operate even in the mind of an unlettered peasant, when in the true sense and significancy of the term he becomes a Christian, it is not too early to apprize you of this as a sure and settled principle—that no man, whether learned or unlearned, can have the faith which makes him a Christian, without having a reason for the faith. We hear of a popular and also of a hereditary faith; but really without evidence it is no faith at all. It may be fancy; but we will not admit it to be belief, nor will we recognise him who owns it as a believer, unless it be a belief grounded on evidence; and we know not a more interesting question for students of theology, the future guides and instructors of our country's population, than what that evidence can be which determines, and rightfully determines, an ordinary workman to receive his Bible as a true and authoritative message from God. It is not the historical evidence; and the question is, what other evidence there is distinct from this and distinct also from many other proofs which receive a literary and argumentative treatment—whether in authorship or in the halls of theology—and which tells on the understand-

ings of the common people at that great mental transition which all those men undergo who pass out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel? Our only reply at present is—that there is such an evidence, and that without it there may be a semblance or profession of the faith; but not the reality of that faith which is unto salvation.*

13. But recalling ourselves from this ulterior part of the course, and coming back on natural theology, we cannot, though still engaged with the premonitions only rather than with the proofs for a God—yet, even at this rudimental stage of our argument, we cannot take even a temporary leave of this great phenomenon—the supremacy of conscience, without telling you how much more it is than a premonition; and that it is indeed a proof, the strongest we think within the reach or compass of the light of nature. It is undoubtedly the most influential of all the natural arguments, and the one to which we are most indebted for the existence of a popular theology in the world. That in every single specimen of our race there should be a faculty which claims to be the guide and superior of all our actions—that this faculty should announce to each of us, and with a voice of authority, what we ought and what we ought not to do—that the reward of a present complacency should be distinctly felt in every bosom in obedience to its dictates, and that as distinct a present remorse should follow the violation of these, suggesting thereby the fancy or the fear of a coming vengeance—there is something in all this which powerfully speaks both to the being and character of a God, which tells of a living artificer for this moral mechanism of ours, and who has imprinted on it the traces both of His love for righteousness, and of His hatred for iniquity.

14. And here we would remind you of Bishop Butler's admirable illustration, when he makes use of the analogy between the function of conscience in a man, and of the regulator in a watch—arguing of the one that, if it proves a maker, whose design it was that the watch should move regularly; then, by parity of reasoning, that the other proves a maker also, whose design it was that the man should walk conscientiously. And the argument may be obscured, but it is not wholly obliterated, by some posterior derangement which either the material or the moral

* No people so far back in ignorance and apathy as not to be responsible for the entertainment they give either to the denunciations of God's law or the invitations of His gospel. —Rom. i. 14; 2 Cor. ii. 14-16; Heb. xii. 25.

machinery may chance to have undergone; and in virtue of which the regulator may have lost its control over the movements of the watch, or the conscience may have lost its power of command and direction over the devices and doings of the man. Still the design of the original formation might be apparent in each of them, so that we might distinguish in both between the first structure and the consequent aberrations which they had respectively undergone. We might still see, both from the position of the regulator and its obvious bearing on the other parts of the apparatus, that it was inserted in the place it occupies for regulating the force of the instrument, and causing it to keep time; and it might be alike obvious, from the very office assigned to conscience—that of telling him in whose bosom it was inserted, what he ought to be and to do—that it was placed there for the express purpose of keeping him in the walk of duty. By a stress on the one, the regulator may no longer retain its efficacy; by a perverting influence on the other, the conscience, though still the rightful, may no longer be the real sovereign—yet, though overborne in the anarchy and insurrection of the lower powers, does it nevertheless send forth a reclaiming and remonstrating voice that bespeaks the high original from which it has fallen. We will not dwell on the striking accordancy between this phenomenon of our moral nature, and the record which has been handed down to us, both of the first estate in which man was created, and his subsequent degeneracy therefrom. We are not yet drawing on revelation; but, looking apart from its lessons altogether, would view the supremacy of conscience in the light of a mere fact or finding on the territory of human experience; and there is none within the whole range of it which we not only say more promptly and powerfully suggests, but none which more authoritatively sanctions the idea of a God.

15. Before we proceed to enter at full length on the proofs for a Deity, let me remark a singular advantage which we conceive ourselves entitled to claim at the very outset of our inquiries—grounded on a principle quite familiar to those who are at all intelligent or expert in argument—we mean the difficulty of establishing a negative, when put in that form which demands an extended survey over some certain amount of space or time ere we can make it good. There is no doubt a way of so restricting or limiting the negative proposition as would put an end to aught of peculiar difficulty. But let us have recourse to ex-

amples. It might be affirmed of a certain individual, that yesterday, and at a given place, he did perform a benevolent action. This is an affirmative proposition, and if true, it were easy, with the advantage of such specific circumstances, to lead proof for establishing the truth of it. But in precise counterpart to this, the negative proposition might be offered, that at that time and in that place he did not perform the benevolent action. Why, if aided by these specifications it might be as easy to make make good this proposition as the former, but let us dismiss the specifications, or at least let us very much widen and enlarge them, and then observe the effect. Let the proposition now be, that last year he performed a benevolent action. This is an affirmative; and if he who hazards it has ground for the assertion, he will soon come at the particulars by which to make it good—as the person who was the object of the charity in question, the house perhaps wherein the act of kindness was rendered, the witnesses who can vouch for its reality. Let us now try a negative proposition of the same range, and say that he did not perform a benevolent action all last year. Only think, in the absence of the alone competent testimony, which is his own, how difficult, if indeed not impossible, it were to make out the proposition. Why, for this purpose you would need to track his whole history for a twelvemonth, and that some one should have kept by him, and haunted all his footsteps, and kept an eye upon all his outgoings, and taken account of every movement, and not for a single day or hour or moment intermitted his close and constant espionage. This is one instance, and it is akin with all others, of the difficulty which there is in establishing a negative. And you may see how the difficulty could be manyfold aggravated by generalizing the negative still more—as if, instead of saying that he had not performed a benevolent action all last year, we should say that he had not done so during the whole of his lifetime. Why, it would just require that the vigilance, which it were most difficult to keep up even for a single day, and which were brought to the verge of impossibility if it had to be maintained throughout a year—that it should be still further extended to a whole generation. It were plainly impracticable.

16. But let me give an example which involves the element of space, as the other did the element of time. Let us conceive that in a certain island recently discovered, and yet most imperfectly known, the affirmation was made by one of its visitors and

explorers to his fellows, that there was a crater within its limits, bearing every appearance of an ancient though now extinct volcano. If he spoke knowingly and truly, he would be at no loss to establish this positive averment—his proofs being concentred on a given spot, to which he could guide his companions. But, instead of this, let the negative proposition be ventured, that there was no such crater, and not the vestige of one in the island—it is not by the mere visit of one locality, as in the former case, but by a search and entry upon all the localities, that the proposition could be disposed of, by either being verified or disproved. It must be obvious to you, that the difficulty is just in proportion to the largeness of the subject over which this said negative proposition is made to extend. Had the island been twice as large, it would just require twice the labour to make good the negative which had been uttered regarding it. Had it been the size of our own Britain, it would have required an enormous survey to make good the denial of any crater being to be found within its borders; and you can easily imagine such an enlargement of the territory, that to substantiate the same proposition throughout the whole length and breadth of it, would, for the mere induction of the requisite and indispensable evidence, have baffled the attempts of the whole species for many generations.

17. You will now understand the tremendous presumption of him who could venture on the negative proposition, and so as with all the confidence of one who had ascertained it, to say that there is no God. There is all the difference of infinity between the affirmative and the negative proposition on this question. If a God there be, He might imprint the signatures of His existence on some handbreadth portion of the immensity which He fills; and we discover that He is, on some piece of exquisite workmanship that lies on little room before us, as on a single leaf of the myriads that wave innumerable in the forest, or in the structure of a single eye, which condenses more of evidence for design than we at least can descry on the broad face of the heavens above our head, or in the construction of a whole planetarium. Nay, more impressively still, if there is a God indeed, He might deposit a conscience in every bosom, and so plant the lesson of His reality within the narrow homestead of one's own thoughts. But only think of the mighty travels which that spirit must go through, who shall be entitled to proclaim that a God is not. He must describe all space. He must explore

the records of all ages. He must light on every world, and after having made search and entrance in one and all the chambers of immensity—after having compassed and become the master of all time and all truth and all nature, then, and then only, is he able to tell that throughout all the amplitudes and all the recesses of a universe which he had thoroughly examined, the traces of a God were nowhere to be found.

18. You will now see the difference between two things which have never been sufficiently distinguished from each other—atheism and antitheism. The proper opposites to each other on the question of a God are theism and antitheism, held respectively by those who believe in the existence of a Deity, and those who deny it. Atheism, rightly understood, stands in the position of neutrality between these antagonists. It is an unbeliever, whereas antitheism is a disbeliever. The one refuses the doctrine of a God, because of the want of proof for His existence. The other does more than refuse—it resists the doctrine of a God; but to be justified in this, it should be able to allege the proofs which it has gathered against His existence. Atheism is a blank negation, and nothing more; and for the mind to be left in this state, it is enough that the arguments for a God should make no impression on it. Antitheism, again, is a strenuous and resolved adversary; though for the mind to be put into this state, it should first have confidently ascertained that there is no God. Atheism refuses to affirm that there is a God; but neither will it deny Him—its being the midway and ambiguous state of pure scepticism. But there is nothing sceptical in antitheism—for while atheism, though it complains of the lack of evidence, can yet affirm that a God may be; antitheism, as if it had not only repelled the positive but established the negative on this question, lifts the confident dogmatic assertion that God is not. We have already said enough to expose the monstrous pretensions of this dogmatism, and how both sound logic and sound experience alike reclaim against it.

19. One can imagine the proofs for a God being less and less satisfactory to various minds, which we may conceive placed in receding order till we have reached the point of atheism. We could recede no further back without entering on the region of antitheism; a position this utterly incompetent to every limited creature, barred as he is from it by the impossibility of establishing a negative on the question of a God. All reason and philosophy therefore will agree in this, that there is a *ne plus*

ultra in that direction; so that the greatest point of remoteness from belief in a God which any, whether of loftiest or most limited intellect, can assume, unless resolved on the abjuration of intellect altogether, is that of blank and negative atheism. Our first converse then might be held with the occupiers of this ground, for antitheism and antitheists we may well now give up as sufficiently and fully disposed of. One might understand such a lack of all impression from the argument for a God, as to admit the possibility of atheism. But it does give a singularly advantageous outset to our reasoning on this question, its being so clearly made out that aught beyond this is really impossible; and that a man cannot profess to be farther gone in his infidelity than atheism, but by a violent outrage and transgression of every principle of evidence.

20. But previous to all argumentative dealing with him, let it be observed, that if, on the one hand, our antagonist can go no farther back than to the atheism on which he is posted, we, on the other hand, can carry as far back the power and urgency of those moral calls and moral considerations, on which we have been demanding the earnest, solemn, and respectful attention of all, to the question of a God. The voice of demand and remonstrance which we have lifted on this subject reaches even to the atheist. He may not have even in its slightest degree the conviction of a God. But enough for our initial treatment of him that he has the conception of a God. He knows what is meant by the utterance of His name. The possibility of His existence he cannot deny, without incurring all that delinquency of understanding which is implied in antitheism. He may allege the want of proof that a God there is; but for aught he can tell, a God may be; and he incurs a delinquency of heart if the thought of God, even in this incipient form, have entered his mind, and been present there without an effort or a wish to ascertain Him. We are not asking belief without evidence at his hands. We only ask him to look our way, and not shut his eyes—or listen to the advocacy of a God, and not shut his ears. The call surely is imperative thus far, and ought at least to evoke atheism from the fastness which it occupies. And if it do not—if its reckless and unfaltering disciple, resolute in his adherence to the infidelity which he loves, refuse to cast a persevering regard towards the quarter in which, if anywhere, a God is to be found —if he will thus brave all the hazards of wilful ignorance on a question which, for aught he knows, involves the relation where-

in he is to stand for ever with the first Parent and greatest power of the universe ;—then, whatever be the obscuration which now rests on this first and greatest object in theology, atheist though he be, its corresponding ethics are at play—telling him of obligations which it is his duty to perform, and which it will be at his peril to violate ; and making it clear, even to his own conscience, that there is a guilt of the same species resting upon him, who cares not to know of a yet uncertain God—as on him who, in the presence of a manifested Deity, could trample on His sovereignty, or bid insulting defiance to the mandates which had issued from His throne.

21. Our present argument involves in it the principles on which might be vindicated the religious education both of the children in a family, and of the general peasantry in a land. In beginning with either, we shall of course find a great destitution of knowledge, and of that only belief which deserves the name—a belief grounded upon evidence. Yet, in the minds of both, there is what may be termed a sufficient elementary preparation for the commencement of our efforts—a sort of natural rudiments anterior to our very first lessons, and preparing the way for them. There may beforehand be indefinitely little of religious knowledge, and yet enough within them by which to test and to evoke the religious character or disposition, when the offer of this knowledge is first given to them, so as to constitute them, even at this initial stage, the fit subjects of a moral and judicial cognizance. However incapable a child may be of dealing argumentatively with the question, he is abundantly capable, and at the first dawn of his understanding, to conceive of God; and giving forth a duteous response of right and appropriate feeling, to be solemnized by the idea of Him. This shows itself in very early life; and from that moment there is room and reason for a religious discipline. Not that there is yet enough of light in the embryo intellect by which to estimate the proofs either for a God or for a Bible, but enough of light in the embryo conscience by which to challenge its earnest docile reverence for these, when the light of the parental mind is brought to bear upon it. It is true that it is only in its own light that it can apprehend or judge or believe. But previous, and it may be long previous to this, may it both feel and give way to the obligation of attending and considering and dwelling upon the thing set before it in the light of another—and of giving earnest heed thereunto till the day dawn and the day-star

arise in its own heart. It is this precedency of the moral to the intellectual, and this direction or charge which the one rightfully takes of the other, that rationalizes, if we may so express it, the whole business of religious education; and it is on this principle that we should meet the invectives of those who, to philosophize the process, would wait the development of full-grown faculties, and meanwhile withhold the lessons of this sacred scholarship altogether—a system on which religion and all its blessings would speedily disappear from the land.

22. And the same neglect and abandonment which would prove ruinous in a family, would also prove ruinous throughout a country at large. If the moral exigencies of a household demand the parental rule for which we are contending, no less do the moral exigencies of a nation demand what many would stigmatize as a priestly rule; but which is just that guidance of a population by the ministers of Christianity in the ways of truth and wisdom, whereby men are conducted to all the blessings of order and prosperity in the life that now is, and to the higher blessings of a glorious immortality in the life that is to come. Doubtless, there is a certain authority implied in such a regimen as this, if by authority be meant the constraining influence of a call on the attention of the people to a subject, by the proofs of which their understandings have not yet been convinced or enlightened. But there is no infringement of liberty in such constraint, when it is the constraint of their own consciences; or if, when the Sabbath bell summons their attendance on the lessons of religion, they yield it obedience under the feeling and impulse of their own sense of obligation. The discipline of a parish and the discipline of a family can both be vindicated on the same principles. In neither can the conviction be made to outrun the evidence; but in both the attention beforehand must be effectually challenged and enlisted, else no conviction will follow. And for this, God hath opened a way for His own messengers, and so as to provide them with an introduction to the hearts even of the most profligate and unlettered peasantry on earth. He has not left Himself without the vouchers of His own reality, in the innermost recesses of their moral nature—insomuch that if the voice lifted in their hearing do not awaken them from the lethargy of their deep irreligion, there is enough in the high argument wherewith it was charged, to supply the materials of their most righteous and everlasting condemnation.

BOOK II.—NATURAL THEOLOGY.

CHAPTER I.

PROOFS FROM EXTERNAL NATURE FOR THE BEING OF A GOD.

1. We do not stop to consider those arguments for the Divine existence, which however extolled and valued in their day, have since not only met, what appears to us, with a solid and conclusive refutation, but have been set aside by general consent as baseless and unsatisfactory. Some of these reasonings, however, still deserve to be studied, if for nothing more than because they are at once specimens and products of high talent—not, however, as belonging any longer to the subject of theology, but only as belonging to the literature of the subject, though that part of it which has now gone by. The first and foremost of these specimens is the famous *a priori* argument of Dr. Samuel Clarke, which, along with the consideration whereby it has been finally disposed of, is altogether worthy of being mastered—even though the whole fruit of the conquest and acquisition should be the discovery of wherein it is that its real weakness as well as its great apparent strength lies. If by such an effort we do not build up the science of theology, we may at least throw light upon its history, and obtain a view of that which in itself is abundantly interesting—the genius of speculation and philosophy in olden times.

2. But besides this, there is another class of arguments which we feel equally inclined to discard. Besides the *a priori* there is a certain *a posteriori* style of reasoning, which, to our apprehension, is alike invalid and meaningless with the former. It begins with matter as an effect, and would thence reason upwards to a cause or maker for it. But then it views matter not in its beneficial adaptations, not in the obvious utilities to which

it is subservient, not in any of those goodly arrangements which bespeak design, and so a designer; but it views matter barely as existing, and from this property alone would it infer an antecedent mind which had summoned it out of nothing. To make this good, it tells us that eternity is incompetent to matter—for had matter been from everlasting, no adequate cause can be given, no *sufficiens causa* why matter should not be here as well as there, or why all space should not be equally filled by it; and so, because all space is not so filled by it, matter must have had a beginning, or must have been created. It is not necessary that matter should be organized or ordered in any certain way to furnish these reasoners with their argument for a God. It is enough that matter but exist; and so on this very general property, that of mere entity or being, do these scholastics found their inference of a God. This property of existence is indeed a very general one—insomuch that it cannot be claimed as the special or exclusive object of any of the other sciences, and must therefore fall within the province of metaphysics, which, agreeably to our definition, takes cognizance of those higher and larger generalities that are suggested by the comparison of the sciences with each other. The property of existence is quite one of these larger generalities—entity—a property which belongs not to the objects of one science alone, but is shared in common by the objects of far the greater number of the sciences. This entity, then, has no ordinary claim to be viewed as a metaphysical property; and the reasoning founded on it is eminently metaphysical. We say once for all now, what we have said at greater length elsewhere, when treating on the metaphysics of theism, that it is a reasoning which makes no impression whatever on our understanding; and taking our final leave therefore of all such arguments, let us now cast about and see, whether, somewhere within the limits of sense and experience, there be not some firmer stepping-stone and surer pathway to the knowledge of a God.*

3. It is coming down from this obscure and lofty transcendentalism when we pass onward from entity, common to all being, to the other and more special properties of matter, which form its constitution and its laws. We often hear of the wisdom of nature's laws; and it may be well thought therefore that in the consideration of these, we shall meet with more of solid and

* We have no confidence either in Dr. Samuel Clarke's or in any other of the later *a priori* arguments for the being of a God.—Rom. i. 19, 20; Heb. xi. 3.

intelligible argument than heretofore in favour of a Deity. And yet it will be found that it is not in these either, not in the mere laws or powers or properties of matter, where the main strength of the reasoning lies. The truth is, that grant but the existence of matter—and we see nothing in the metaphysical argumentation grounded upon this as its alone element, whence we can clearly or conclusively infer a God—but only imagine it to exist, and it were difficult, nay impossible, to imagine that, along with existence, it should not have properties of some kind or other. The bare circumstance of matter having those adjuncts which are commonly termed properties, will scarcely, if at all, advance our argument for a God. And what is most decisive of this is, that without something else done to matter than endowing it with its present and actual laws—and on which something we shall found the main reasonings of this chapter—it would have been impossible to raise an orderly universe out of a chaos; and what is more, take that something away from matter, leaving to it all its laws, and the universe with its goodly arrangements would lapse again into a chaos, or heaving mass of turbulence and disorder. To illustrate our meaning by examples. The law of impulse is a law; but the fact that all the planets have received an impulse in one direction, and in virtue of which they do not fall to the sun, but are kept out in the circumferences of their respective orbits around him—that is not a law but a disposition, and though it were put an end to, the law of impulse would remain precisely as before. And so the law of digestion in the animal economy is a law; but the placing of the gastric juice in the stomach, or of teeth for the previous and necessary mastication of the food in its passage downward to this receptacle, or of the innumerable vessels for the secretion of that saliva which acts upon it as a solvent to facilitate the result, the various placings of these in their several localities are not laws but dispositions. In like manner, the law of refraction in optics is a law; but the situations and forms of the different humours in the eye, the muscles wherewith it is beset, and which regulate the distance at which the pencils of refracted light converge into a point, at this very distance behind a canvas named the retina, and on which in consequence the images of external objects are formed—these are not laws but dispositions, and without which the laws themselves could never have brought about any of the fulfilments which are now specified. Such dispositions are innumerable. Every animal and every

vegetable structure teems with them. Among the first that occur, let me instance the eye-lashes, of the greatest use where they are placed, and which they could be nowhere else, for the protection of this delicate organ; and the nails, in the very position where they are most serviceable, instead of being protruded as useless excrescences on other parts of the body; and the thumb, in relation to its counterpart fingers for the purposes of holding; and the cutters and grinders, which were they to change places, would be far less commodious for the act of eating; and a countless host of other collocations, whether in plants or in bodies of living creatures—all of indispensable utility, and all of which are most obviously distinguishable from laws. Now, what we affirm is, that even though we should admit matter, with all its laws, to be eternal—if ever these dispositions had a beginning, it is not the laws, the blind headlong forces or laws which could ever have originated them; or, on the other hand, should these dispositions ever be destroyed, it is not the laws which can replace them.

4. Herein lies the main strength of our argument for a God, as furnished by the contemplation of external nature. Whether indeed we reason on a divine or a human workmanship, the inference of design is grounded in both on the same kind of data. But it is obvious that in the case of the human artificer this inference is grounded on the dispositions of matter, and on these alone. We do not accredit him either with the creation of the material that he uses, or with the establishment of any of its properties. He takes matter as he finds it; and, without attempting to communicate to it any new laws, he can but avail himself and try to make the most of the laws already in operation; and this he does simply by fashioning things aright and placing them aright—and so putting that matter, which he neither called into being nor endowed with its properties, into the way of being moved or directed towards the accomplishment of some purpose that he has in view. In the execution of a machine, he only gives to each thing, of previous existence and properties, which passes through his hands, its right size, its right form, its right situation. He does not give its elasticity to the mainspring of a watch: he only so relates it to the other machinery that it may give impulse to the whole. He did not ordain the mechanical powers; but he avails himself of one of these, when, by a succession of levers, each connected with the others by the teeth and pinions of a wheelwork, he institutes a series of increasing

velocities between the central force and the revolving second hand. It was not he who established the law of equal vibrations in a pendulum or balance-wheel; but it is he who fixes the wheel in that position, where it restrains the movement, and keeps it at a uniform pace. It was not he who established that law to which the regulator is indebted for its power either to accelerate the motion or to retard it; but it is he who, knowing the law, assigned to the regulator that place of command where alone it could guide and overrule the motion. It was not he who gave the glass its transparency; but it is he who spread it over the face of the timepiece, at once protecting it from injury, and yet leaving open to the observation of the eye the characters which are graven thereupon. In a word, he is the author only of the dispositions in this mechanism, and not of the laws. His sole office is to put things of right quality, size, and form, into their right places; and yet though this be all he does, it is enough to imprint the unequivocal traces of design and a designer upon his performance; and to leave this resistless attestation, that the hand of an artist has been there. He ordains no law, he communicates no property. For example, it is not he who gives to flint its power of striking fire with iron; yet he gives full indication of the purpose and the purposing mind that has been concerned in the fabrication of a gun-lock, by giving to the flint and the iron their respective places, so that the fire which is struck out between them shall light the gunpowder that has been set in the pan below. Neither hath he established the law or property of deflagration; yet does he sufficiently impress another mark of intelligence on this product of human skill, by the position of the touch-hole, and so the opening of a passage from the kindling without to the combustible within. We trust that this distinction between the dispositions and the laws is sufficiently apparent, and needs be traced no further, though observable in every combination of means or materials for every useful end which the hand of man at the bidding of his mind has had to do with—as a ship, or a steam-engine, or a printing-press, or a plough, or a carriage, or an implement of any sort where two or more things are so put together as to subserve some obvious utility, which may be gathered from the mere inspection of the machine itself, and especially when we see it in actual operation. Without the dispositions the laws could do nothing of themselves; for, let the parts of any of the instruments now specified be taken down and thrown

together at random, they would but exhibit a little chaos, and give no mark whatever of any skill having been concerned in the chance-medley arrangement which lay before our eyes; nor would even all the laws of nature that we know of bring order out of this confusion. They are the dispositions, and they alone which have to do with the setting up of these respective machines—though, after they have been set up, they are the laws which have to do with the working of them. In the workmanships of art the artificer man is limited to the dispositions, the laws having been found to his hand; yet in the various machines which are of his setting up we can read the incontestable signatures of a contrivance and a contriver. In the workmanships of nature, the artificer or yet unknown God may have both created the matter and established its laws as well as its collocations; yet, just as in the human fabrications, it is not in the laws, but in the machinery of our world that we discern the indications of a Deity. He may have—we are sure that He has—established the laws of matter; but still it is by its dispositions that we discover Him. It is not through the medium of the laws which keep the machine in motion, but through the medium of the dispositions by which the machine was set up, that we descry the finger of an artificer in the mundane system around us. We do not ask if ever a time was when the matter of the world had no existence, or if ever a time was when the laws of this matter were not in operation; but if ever a time was when the present order of the world—its machinery and exquisite organic structures—had yet to be set up? It is in these then that the wisdom of a presiding mind is most legibly held forth to us—these form our chief, if not our only materials on the field of external nature for the demonstration of a God.*

5. This distinction of ours between the dispositions of matter and its laws serves for a mighty disencumbrance of the whole argument, relieving it of much that is weak and obscure and questionable. We affirm not the eternity of matter, save for the purpose of bringing out our conclusion. When reasoning on the present order of things, we do not need to prove its non-eternity—an attempt this on which a deal of most unsatisfactory metaphysics has been expended. It is a lesson which might come to us from another quarter, and accordingly it has been given forth

* The main argument for a God from the external world lies not in the laws of matter, but in its dispositions.—Gen. i.; Ps. civ.; cxxxix. 14-16; Job xxvi.; xxxvi. 26-33; xxxvii xxxix.

distinctly and decisively by a well-accredited revelation. Whether the light of nature be competent or not to the discovery that the matter of our world was created out of nothing, it is well that on the basis of a most familiar experience it can discern so clearly and affirm so undoubtingly, when looking to the manifold and goodly dispositions which obtain in the actual system of our world, that the master-hand of a great and intelligent Architect must have been concerned in them, who, whether the materials had a previous existence or not, must have put them together into all those innumerable varieties of orderly and beneficial collocation which are everywhere around us, and make the whole of visible nature instinct with the evidence of a Deity. In as far as the argument is founded on the dispositions of matter, and neither on its existence nor its laws, there is a perfect kindredness between the works of nature and those of human art; and all that seems necessary to render the inference of a God who willed and designed, not the substance of the world, but its present subsistent economy into being—is to prove that this economy had a commencement, or was not from everlasting.

6. Ere I proceed to point out where it is that this proof is to be found, let me state the argument of this lecture in terms suggested in a felicitous and memorable distinction by Professor Robison, when, in the introduction to his "Course of Natural Philosophy," he took a general view of the philosophy of external nature, and assigned the proper place and description to its respective sciences. He first made a general division of the whole into two sciences—the one being the science of contemporaneous, the other the science of successive nature; or to express it differently, the one the science of objects, the other of events; or differently still, the one the science of all those sensible properties in matter which exist together at the same moment in space, the other the science of those processes which require time for their evolution and accomplishment. The forms, the magnitude, the dispositions of bodies, and of their several parts, all belong, it is obvious, to the former, or to contemporaneous nature; whereas processes, all of which are referable to certain forces or laws, such as the mechanical forces, or the laws of chemical affinity, or the laws of physiology and electricity and magnetism and optics—these must be assigned to the latter department, or to the science of successive nature. Now, by one of Mr. Robison's fine generalizations, the former is termed natural history, the latter natural philosophy; and were

we to announce the principle of our argument in the nomenclature of these definitions, we should say—that if the arrangements of our existing natural history were destroyed, there is nothing in the laws of our existing natural philosophy which is fitted to replace them; or what is tantamount to this, if ever a time was when the present order, the present economy of things, was not, it could never have been set up, never have been established, by all the known powers of nature put together; so that to account for its endless variety and number of useful collocations—such as on the field of human experience, when we have access to the cause which gave them birth, we never see brought forth at random or originated in any other way than by a designer's hand—we, in the defect of all visible agencies on the theatre of sense and observation, are shut up to the fiat and interposition of a God.

7. There are certain reasonings in behalf of a commencement for our present order of things which we shall here omit, and that not altogether from their want of strength, but from their want of obviousness, and just because we can afford so well to give them up. That our present animal and vegetable races should have subsisted from all eternity, for example, is one of those odd imaginations of atheism which could perhaps be effectually disposed of by general considerations, such as the extreme difficulty of conceiving an eternal succession of generations *ab ante*, and extreme unlikelihood of a chain that stretched in that direction to infinity—where each link was dependent on its immediate predecessor; and yet where all together, the series on the whole, was independent of any cause *ab extra*, which could be assigned for the existence of it. It certainly does mark the strange and incongruous credulity of scepticism — properties which, however seemingly opposite to each other, are often conjoined—that it should take refuge and feel itself secure in such a hypothesis as this—which when itself complains of the difficulties that encompass the religious system, might well be urged home as one among the many and far more formidable difficulties of infidelity.

8. And neither shall we insist now on the historical proofs for a commencement to the present system of our world—though this might well be deemed as the most appropriate evidence for the truth of an event, a thing in itself historical. But we shall meanwhile forego this argument also, though, had we entered on it, we should have felt ourselves entitled, and that in strict

philosophy or on the clearest and most received principles of sound criticism, to have drawn largely on the Jewish records or writings of the Old Testament; and this in the face of a very general disposition to set them aside as witnesses—because themselves regarded, while the investigation is going forward, as prisoners on their trial. There is a perversity on this subject, which we have elsewhere attempted to expose; and in virtue of which the best vouchers of all antiquity are liable to be set aside, merely because from their hundred-fold greater evidence than that of all the others which have come down to us from the remoter periods of the world, they have long commanded the faith and veneration of ages.

9. But instead of entering either on a metaphysical or on the historical argument for a commencement to our present world, let us see whether more palpable and satisfying indications of this might not be collected, simply by looking directly and outwardly on the scene of observation, as spread out before us. One thing is obvious, that there are causes now at work, which if not counteracted, must at length issue in the submerging of all the dry land on the face of our globe under the waters of our present ocean, or in the total demolition of that platform which serves at once for the occupancy and the sustenance of all the living generations of land animals. There are agents in nature, as of frost, for example, under the operation of which the hardest of earth's rocky materials are in successive layers loosened and pulverized, or are separated and fall in large masses from the precipices to which they have adhered for ages. In either way, and more rapidly, we believe, by the slow unobserved dissipation of its substance in those minute particles which are constantly scaling off from day to day, and from hour to hour, than by those mighty avalanches which occur at longer intervals of time, burying villages in their ruins, and covering the plains below with the wrecks and memorials of a great catastrophe—but in either way are the sightliest mountains on the face of our globe, the Alps and the Andes of our present continent, letting themselves down from the lofty eminence which they now occupy. But this process of descent and disintegration will not stop here. The same power which severed these fragments from their original rock, continues to act upon them; and if not previously transported to the rivers, or led where they are subjected to other forces, will, in the course of years or centuries, reduce them to the dust of the field. And neither is this their final

resting-place—for there they are liable with every shower that falls to be carried so far downward in furrows, till after many thousand perhaps of successive journeys, they mingle with the stream, where they are quickly transported in the form of sediment, and lodged in the bottom of the ocean. And this process is mightily hastened both by the undermining of every river's bank, and the perpetual action of the waves along the margin which separates the land from the sea—an action which never ceases to reiterate by impulses of countless number on the shore, and against which the firmest battlements along the coast are at length destined to give way. It is to the incessant motion of the atmosphere, the most restless and susceptible of all our elements, that this demolition is mainly and primarily owing—for it is both the bearer of those vapours which, deposited in rain, act by a descending force upon the uplands, and it is the impellent of those waves which operate on the beach—beside that by its own direct impulse on the dry and powdery soil, it scatters the loose earth in every direction which the winds of heaven might take, but yet so as that by the unfailing law of gravity, the matter of our dry land must be ever tending to a lower level than before. The progression we admit to be exceeding slow—nor can we tell how many thousands are the generations which must elapse before it reaches its accomplishment. But it should be remembered that eternity forms an element of this calculation; and with this high reckoning on our side, we can with all confidence affirm of the earth we tread upon, that it is posting visibly to its end—that it will not survive the indefinite tear and wear of centuries, that it now wastes and waxes old, and must ultimately disappear, when over the whole face of our world there shall be nought but one howling wilderness of waters.*

10. It is from what we behold of this process at present, and *in transitu*, that we infer the certainty of its future termination. But with equal confidence might we infer the certainty of its past commencement. For if it never had a beginning, then at all events it could not have subsisted to the present day—seeing that there could only be a definite time between its outset and its final consummation; so that if for the former extreme you have to go upward among the viewless recesses of the eternity behind us, then the whole process must have elapsed long ago, or rather, for the latter extreme also, we should have to go up-

* The present system of things contains within itself the elements of decay.—2 Cor. iv. 18; Job xiv. 18, 19; Heb. i. 10, 12.

ward among recesses alike inaccessible, and alike beyond or above all our powers of computation.

11. But we are aware that when the argument is put in this form, it is capable of being evaded. We may be told that possibly there is an elevation of the land by the expansive force of heat from below, which would compensate for the causes of its degradation that we have now specified. At this rate the present living generations might still be kept above water, and so have leave to be sustained and perpetuated everlastingly. It will be better therefore that we go at once to the direct proofs which observation offers, and which have been so multiplied of late years, for the commencement of our present system—even though it should be only to establish a matter which might well seem so unnecessary to be argued at all, as that the present animal and vegetable races have not subsisted from eternity. We should not grudge the superabundant evidence that might be adduced upon this question—seeing that it lands us in the nearest and most experimental demonstration which can be gathered from the phenomena of the material world for the intervention of a God.

12. In building up this argument, it is chiefly on the science of geology that we draw, which of late years has obtained so great, and still rapidly growing, an accession to its facts and its evidences. Till the time of Cuvier, its observations were almost exclusively mineralogical—directed as they chiefly were to the structure and distribution of all that various matter which forms the crust of our globe. On this large and broad field of survey, the views which it gave forth were of a general and extended character, relating principally to the lie and inclination of those numerous layers which are so visible everywhere on the surface of the earth, and at the greatest accessible depths beneath it, to the order in which these seem to have incrusted each other, and to the distinction between the stratified and crystallized rocks. The origin of the latter formed one of the greatest controversies in the science. Both parties held the common opinion that the matter thus crystallized was at one time in a liquid state; but the great dispute turned on the solvent power, or whether the matter in question had been melted by heat or dissolved by water. With this, however, and many other diversities, there seems to have been a very general agreement amongst all—with the exception of those who have been termed the Mosaic geologists—that this earth has been the theatre of many and

great revolutions—that the present economy of things has arisen from a chaos brought on by the last of these, but that each of the former catastrophes was also succeeded by a peculiar economy of its own, that in like manner as now, the innumerable rivers which are wearing down our present land, bearing it down in sediment, and spreading it in successive layers over the bottom of the sea, and so as to form the strata of the next order of things which will come after the present one,—in like manner, under each of the former economies, strata were deposited in the same way, and so as to form the materials of that economy by which it was succeeded and replaced. It is thus that geologists tell us of the distinct and successive formations which have taken place in the history of our vexed and agitated globe; and from the relative positions of which they can assign their order of succession, or the relative positions of each of them.

13. But they are the discoveries of Cuvier, now in rapid process of multiplication and enlargement by those who follow him in the same walk, which promise to make geology one of the most interesting of the sciences. What we now advert to is the wondrous field of observation which has of late been opened up to us in the numerous organic remains that lie scattered through all these formations, with the exception perhaps of the one or two oldest in the series as laid down by geologists—so numerous that they have now been systematized into a fossil botany and fossil zoology—the botany and the zoology, therefore, it might well be concluded, of former worlds, all successively overspreading the same globe with the one that we now tread upon, but constituting wholly different surfaces, made up of other seas and continents and islands from those which compose the present geography of the earth. We now walk on a platform of our own, raised above the waters by an elevating power from beneath, and clothed with its own peculiar herbage, for the sustenance of its own peculiar tribes and genera and species of living creatures. But mineralogists can tell, and that on the evidence of mineralogy alone, of the wreck and the wear of older platforms, now gone by, each undergoing the same process of decay, along which our present world is visibly hastening to its end, and each attesting its own station in the order of descent by the place which its ruins now occupy. But the testimony of these observers did not command the general attention, or far less the large, if not the general assent which is now given to it, till they were followed by another class of naturalists, who super-

added a distinct and independent evidence of their own, and which, by the very force that lies in its combination with the other, makes it, in our estimation, wellnigh irresistible. We mean that of the comparative anatomists, or rather the students of organic nature, alike in its animal and vegetable departments, whose province it is not to study the composition or arrangement of the rocks, but certain minute characters that are graven thereupon, and in consequence of which they can tell that each distinct formation—each platform or economy of other periods, whereof it was the relic and the representative—had, like the existing panorama on which we now open our eyes, its own peculiar botany, its own peculiar zoology. Or, in other words, from the study of these characters alone, and which have been well denominated the archives of the globe, we learn that each of these bygone worlds had other plants than ours, and was peopled with other generations both of land and of sea animals. Altogether it is a wondrous contemplation to which geology of late has introduced us—vast and sublime as astronomy itself; for each science deals with the element of immensity, the one being the immensity of space, the other of time—the one carrying us abroad over the plains of an infinitude that knows no bounds, the other upward to the heights of an unknown antiquity, and among the primeval counsels of a God who is unsearchable. In looking back through the ascending generations of men to our own patriarchal ages, we feel as if a mighty period had elapsed from the commencement of our world; but to think of our world as itself a generation, or but one in a pedigree of worlds, the single link of a progression which moves with giant footstep from one system to another—thus to lift our computation from thousands of years to thousands and millions of centuries—to trace a way, not through successive eras of our own solitary race, but from one dynasty to another of successive creations—it is this which proves so baffling to man's spirit, and gives an emphasis unfelt before to the saying of an inspired patriarch, who, after having exhausted his description of God's present and visible works, or as it were his last and nearest footsteps, exclaims that these are only parts of His ways; for how small a portion is heard of Him, and the secrets, whether of His mighty power or mysterious purposes, who can comprehend?

14. But out of these materials let us construct our argument for the hand of a God, or the intromission of a Divine power with the steps of that process which geology, in the light of an

evidence growing every day, now sets before us. In the first place, it is observed of the animal remains in the proximate formation, or that which immediately precedes our own, that they indicate a good many of the existing species, and some even of the existing genera of our present era; but that in the next higher formation the number of these is greatly diminished; and that after having reached one or two more in the order of ascent, all traces of such living creatures as those by which the earth is now peopled wholly disappear. Take, in connexion with this, the now all but universal faith of naturalists: first, that there is no such thing as spontaneous generation—that each animal comes from a parent of its own likeness; and that out of this established line of transmission, there is not, so far as we have observed, a known power in nature, and not any combination of powers, whether electric, or chemical, or mechanical, or of whatever description, which has yielded any product that approximated in the least to an organic creature, having the functions of life, and all those numerous collocations of parts and members and vessels, of nice and curious workmanship, which are indispensable to its being. And secondly, add to this the no less generally received doctrine, that all the distinct species of animals are separated by invincible barriers from each other —that there is no transmutation of them by intermixture into a progeny of different sorts from the parentage which gave them birth, for that the power of further descent is arrested at the first step of any such mongrel generation. Conjoin these two doctrines, and then ask whence was it that the present genera and species of our globe took their commencement? for in a few steps upward among the formations which preceded our era, we lose all trace or vestige of the existence of any of them. Not from an antecedent parentage of their own likeness, for none such in the older periods of the world are to be found. Not from an antecedent parentage of different likeness, for thus to suppose that the zoology of our present has sprung from the zoology of altogether dissimilar characters, in the eras that have gone before us, were in direct contravention to our second law. And finally, as not by birth, so not by any composition of any other sort that lies within all the known powers and resources of materialism, for this again were as direct a contravention to our first law. In a word, we know of no power in all the magazines of nature that could have originated the new races, whether of animals or vegetables, which now replenish our world; and at no transition in

nature's history do we meet either with a more palpable necessity or more palpable evidence for the finger and forthputting of a God.

15. It is obvious that in proportion to the number of independent circumstances which meet together in one combination, each and all of them being indispensable to some end of obvious utility, the greater is the unlikelihood of their having met at random, or by the headlong operation of blind and unconscious forces; and what is tantamount to this, the greater is the likelihood of their having been joined and fitted to each other by a designing cause—by an intelligent Being who both devised the end and devised the means for its accomplishment—who both conceived the purpose and had the power, as evinced in the actual forthputting, of carrying into effect. The concurrence even of but two such circumstances, if necessary, and at the same time effectual for some given fulfilment, would yield a certain amount of probability that for the sake of this fulfilment they were so adjusted to each other. This probability would be greatly enhanced by the accession of a third circumstance, and would increase most rapidly—at more, in fact, than a geometrical pace—were a fourth or fifth or sixth circumstance added to the number of them, each being essential to the production of some obvious and desirable end, till, as must be well known to every one conversant in the doctrine of chances, should there be anything like ten or twenty independent conditions that enter into some useful combination, so as to form an instrument or mechanism of any sort, the numerical proof yielded thereby of its being not a blind or fortuitous product, but the product of a contrivance, and come from the hand of a contriver, exceeds all computation, and at length comes indefinitely near to a moral certainty. It is this which gives such force to the demonstrations of complex anatomy, and makes them so immeasurably superior to those of simpler, though sublime astronomy, in the argument for a God. Nature, it is true, in all her departments, abounds in those collocations which bespeak a designing cause, so as to be everywhere instinct with the evidence of a Divinity, but this evidence is vastly more intense in a collocation of many than of few parts. The manifest office of the eye is seeing. Yet who can tell the multitude and variety of separate conditions which are requisite for the due performance of this function—as a right disposition of the refracting humours—the form and relative position of the different lenses—the structure, I under-

stand, of one of these lenses, not, it would now appear, having a surface of continuous curvature, but formed by a congeries in thousands of minute and microscopic planes, and these with a most precise mathematical adaptation to the object of carrying forward the rays of light unmixed, and free of all optical confusion till they make a distinct image on the retina behind; and then, beside the eyelashes, which serve for a screen of defence, we have the muscles wherewith the organ is so curiously beset, all in right place, yet within such limitations in the range of their command as might best regulate the motions of the eye, whether for the protection of so delicate a mechanism, or for the direct purposes of vision. We give a very imperfect description; but we are quite safe in affirming, that within the narrow compass of an eye there is a greater condensation of evidence for a Deity than we can gather on a broad and general survey of the heavens, from the motions or the relation of part to part of our mighty planetarium. Within the limits of a hand-breadth, and under our immediate observation, He has made a more legible inscription of Himself than can be descried by us, at least among all those wonders of the firmament which the telescope has unfolded—and this on but a single organ of the human body. That wondrous microcosm which teems and is crowded all over with innumerable collocations and fitnesses, not of convenience only, but of indispensable necessity for upholding man in the state and with the functions of a living creature—insomuch that we do not overstate in our reckoning when we affirm, that for the purpose of insuring to him the ease of every moment, ten thousand independent circumstances must meet together, the failure of any one of which would be death or intolerable agony. You cannot wonder, then, at the value we have for the argument in which we expatiated on the palpable and manifold evidence for the interposition of a God—at that period when a new economy arose from the ruins of the one that had gone before it, and the earth, which had been desolated of its old, was replenished with new generations.

16. There is no need of any peculiar mental instinct, any principle of evidence *sui generis*, to warrant this conclusion, or vindicate it against the exceptions of sceptics and unbelievers. The evidence on which we now proceed is strictly an experimental one, and of such familiar application, that probably not a day passes without our being called to ground an inference

or judgment thereupon. When we look on a house with its numerous conveniences, we instantly pronounce it to have been the fruit of contrivance, and that it indicates a contriver; and it is not for a different, but for the very same reason, that when we look on the world with its countless adaptations to the comfort and sustenance of those who live in it, we pronounce it to have been the formation of an Architect of adequate skill for devising such a fabric, and adequate power for carrying His scheme into execution. Or, limiting our view still further, in the teeth of an animal there are as obvious characters of design as in the ribs of a grate; or, when we see the vent which surmounts the one, and serves the manifest purpose of conveying upward the smoke which is formed there, we ascribe the purpose to a purposing mind; and it is on no other principle that we read a purpose and require a purposing mind to account for it, when we see that tube or pathway in the animal fabric which conveys its masticated food from the mouth to the stomach. And there is nothing to distinguish here the succession of cause and effect from any of the other and ordinary sequences which take place in nature. From a work that bears upon it the usual and obvious characters of art, we infer an artist—just as from the posterior we infer the prior term of any sequence whereof we had before observed both its terms and the conjunction between them. Should we once see a workmanship of this sort proceed from the hand of a designer, then when another such workmanship comes under our notice, we infer design and a designer for it too, in the very manner that from the sight of any other consequent we infer the antecedent that usually gives birth to it. Let A be the prior and B the posterior term of any sequence between which experience tells that there is the relation of invariableness, so as to follow each other in the order of cause and effect, then when we see A we should anticipate B, or when we see B we should infer A; and just as the terms of any such succession might be represented by these symbols—the application of heat to ice by A, and the melting of it by B; or an impulse by A, and the resulting movement by B; or the contact of a lighted match with gunpowder by A, and its deflagration by B; or the presence of the moon in the firmament above by A, and the elevation of the waters in the ocean beneath by B—so without singularity or deviation of any sort should we liken to these the forthputting of a contriver's skill which we would represent by A, and any given mechanism that

we would at once represent by B, if from the very inspection of it and of its useful collocations, we could gather some purpose which it served, or some function it was fitted to discharge. In this last succession, too, we should either anticipate B from the appearance of A, or infer A from the appearance of B, precisely as we do in all the other successions of nature or history. The argument by which we reason upward from a workmanship to a workman, or from a structure of any sort in which we behold part adapted to part in the relations of convenience and order, to an artificer of adequate strength and skill for the completion of it—this argument is strictly and altogether an experimental one, and to seek for any other on which to vindicate the conclusion, beside being mystical and unsatisfactory, is, in our apprehension, wholly uncalled for.

17. Nor do we think that any other solution would have ever been attempted, but for the imagination of its being called for to meet the infidel objection of Mr. Hume, which might shortly be stated thus, That the world is a singular effect. He says, and truly, that to warrant the inference from a consequent which we have seen to its antecedent which we have not seen, we must at some time or other have had the completed observation of both. We must have seen both A and B, and at least one exemplification of the conjunction between them, ere that from either apart we can conclude of the other, whether it be an antecedent or a consequent. Now, we see the consequent a world; but we never saw the antecedent a God who made the world, and of course never saw Him employed in the making of it. It might be fair enough having once seen the watchmaker, and a watch coming forth of his hands, when we next see a watch, to infer a watchmaker. But when did we ever see a world-maker, or a world coming forth of his hands? To reason from the one to the other, we must have had direct cognizance of both—not a half observation only, but an indispensable whole observation. It is here Mr. Hume contends that the frailty of the reasoning lies; and it is thus that he would nullify the whole of that proof for a God which lies in the *argumentum a posteriori.*

18. It was to meet this that both Reid and Stewart felt themselves driven to the necessity of alleging a separate and original principle of evidence, which before their time never had been heard of. They contended that our inference of design or of a designer from his work, is not grounded on the recollections of

experience at all—that it is not, in fact, an inference, but an intuition, yet as deserving of our confidence as any axiom or first principle of reasoning—it being of the same rank not with the truth that we land in at the termination of a logical process, but higher than this, with the truth from which we take our departure at the commencement of it. This was truly venturing a great deal. It was staking the first and foremost truth in natural religion on a before unheard-of allegation—linking it with what at best was a questionable novelty, so, in fact, as to mystify the argument, and place on a basis that was altogether precarious, the evidence for a God.

19. Now, for ourselves, we do not see the necessity for making this argument other than experimental, as we have amply endeavoured to demonstrate in another place. Let us but discriminate between what is essential and what is accessary in the two terms of a causal succession, and we shall find that there is no singularity whatever in that which we see in a world, and upon which we ground the inference of a designing and intelligent Maker. For you will observe that it is not upon a whole world, but upon a something in the world, that the inference is grounded. It is true that we have never seen a whole world made, but we have seen, times and ways without number, a something made or done which is in the world, and from which something alone we infer that it had an intelligent maker. To illustrate our meaning, it is not from all which is in, or all which is of and belonging to a watch that we infer a watchmaker. It is not because in one part of this mechanism you see gold, and in another silver, and in a third steel, and in a fourth glass; or, in other words, it is not because of its materials that you infer a maker. Neither is it because of the various properties which fall under your notice when you contemplate this workmanship—as the elasticity of one part, or the transparency of another, or the flexibility of a third, or the different weights and colours of its different materials; or, in other words, it is not because of mere properties or powers which reside in the watch that you infer a maker for it. You do not accredit the author of this piece of art either with the creation of its matter, or the establishing of any of those laws which have to do with the performance of its evolutions and the result of them—for if the machine were taken down, and its fragments huddled at random into a little chaos, then with the same matter and the same properties as before, all the marks of contrivance would

vanish, and nothing be left to indicate a contriver. Now, what precisely is it that has disappeared so as to obliterate the evidence for design in this fabrication; or what must be done with the various pieces now lying confused and in chance-medley before us, to restore the indication at one time so palpable of a designer's hand? We have just to set it up in the same order by placing part to part in the same relation as before. We have neither to produce the matter, nor yet to ordain its properties. We have only to fashion and arrange the matter; and in its dispositions alone, in the collocation of parts by which certain means are adapted to some certain end, in this, and this precisely, do we infer the characters of design in a watch, and from this infer that a designer's mind and a designer's hand were concerned in the formation of it. It is not on a whole watch that the inference is based; it is on a something in the watch, and that something is the adaptation of means to an end. Now, there is nothing singular in this. So far from a rare and unexampled procedure, it is one that we witness every day, and in conjunction too with the cause which gives it birth—a purposing mind which aims at some given object, and for the fulfilment of that object, sets fit things in fit places. The whole matter is familiar as household words, at least as daily and hourly household acts—as the placing, for example, of the fire-irons beside the chimney, or of dishes on the table, and of chairs for the company to sit around it; or of books and papers, and implements of writing on the desk that is before you; or of clothes in a wardrobe; or of a thousand other distributions of order and convenience, to which every apartment in our dwelling-places bears witness, and every shelf along its walls. The only difference between these and implements or machines is, that whereas the parts of the former, of the products that come from the hands of our menial servants, are laid out loosely, though in order, to serve some brief temporary purpose—the parts of the latter, of the products that come from the hands of our artisan, are laid out in order too, but fastened and fixed together so as to form a useful instrument for some use or other that may last for years. In either way, the adaptation of means to an end is one of the most familiar and oft-repeated consequents which fall under the observation of every man, and that too in conjunction with the antecedent purposes and doings of some one who put together the means with a view to the end. So that when we see it in a watch, we are presented with no novelty; and it is on the basis

of a most manifold and multiplied experience that we infer, not, we repeat, from the whole watch, but from this which is in the watch, a contriver and a maker for it.

20. And as of watch-making, so of world-making. We never saw the production of that whole assemblage called a world, which in its totality therefore is to us a singular effect. But we can break up this totality. We can detach, in succession, those parts from it which do not belong to our main argument, or scarcely enter into our consideration at all when reasoning for a God, till we arrive at that in which chiefly, if not exclusively, lies the burden of the argument. It is not on the matter of the world that we rest our conclusion. It is very little on the laws of this matter. But they are its dispositions which form nearly the all in all of our demonstration—even those dispositions which present us, in countless thousands and endless variety, with the adaptations of means to ends. This act of adapting means to ends is what we do ourselves, and see others doing every day; and in every instance of such adaptation, viewed as a consequent, and when we have access to the antecedent which gave it birth, we uniformly find that it was a purposing mind which descried the end, and suggested the means which had been put together for its accomplishment. So far, then, from being without experience, when we refer the adaptations of the world to a God; and still more, so far from experience being against a God, the denial of a God were against all our experience. The world, viewed as an aggregate, is a singular effect; but that which is in the world, adaptation of means to an end, is not singular. And it is by fastening our attention upon this as the only essential consequent which we have to do with in our advocacy for a God, that we dispose effectually of the difficulty thus thrown in the way. We stand in no need of any peculiar or original principle to help us out of it. The recollections of our daily experience are quite sufficient to warrant the conclusion; and it is satisfactory to think, that as by putting out of consideration both the existence of matter and its laws, and limiting our view to its collocations alone, we make an escape from much of the obscure and questionable metaphysics which have been put forth on the side of theism, so it is by the same limitation that we are enabled to meet the most formidable objection ever constructed by atheism against the existence of a Deity.

21. It requires thought and the exercise of some discrimination to detect this sophism. It might be felt that the refutation

is still imperfect and must ever remain so, not only because we have never seen a world made, but because we have never seen the very collocations which are in the world, and on which we frame our argument, actually put together by any artificer who devised them. We never saw, for example, the setting up in this way of such collocations as those of an insect or a flower; and so the imagination might still keep its ground that unless we have seen these identical things springing forth of a designer's hand, we cannot reason either from the one or other for the wisdom in which they originated. But it is not on the adaptation for the ends of *these* particular formations that our reasoning is essentially founded. Enough if there be in each of them adaptation for *an* end, for any end. It is this last which we eliminate from the group of accessories by which it might be encompassed, and hold forth as being strictly and precisely that posterior term whereof the prior term is an intelligent author. It is true that we never saw the adaptations of any natural mechanism springing forth of a contriver's hand, any more than we ever saw the making of a world. But as little, it may be, did we ever see the making of a watch; and we should therefore be subjected to the very same disadvantage in that we had never witnessed the formation of an instrument for the measurement of time. But the measurement of time is not only *the* end, it is also *an* end; and adaptation for an end is that of which we have seen many thousand exemplifications. We have only to make this further abstraction from *the* end to *an* end, to get at the only essential consequent on which the inference is founded. It is true that we may never have seen a watch made, but we have seen that which is in the watch—adaptation for an end, along too with its prior term, or the antecedent design in which it originated, a thousand times over. It is enough that of this last we have had the constant and manifold experience; and thus we can pronounce on an infinity of things as having sprung from design, though, in their aggregate or totality, we had never once seen them in the hands of a maker—be it a watch, or a plough, or a gun-lock, or a steam-engine, or a spinning-mill, or, finally, a world. Each of these may be to us a singular effect, when viewed as a whole; but there is that enveloped in each on which alone the argument essentially hinges, and in which there is no singularity. In order to find it, though we should never have witnessed the production of any of them, we have but to look at the products themselves—to inspect their various mechanisms,

and there see in each the manifest subserviency to some end or other of their respective collocations. So it is that although we never saw a watch made, we infer the watchmaker; and so it is that, although we never saw a world made, we infer the world-maker. We were not present to witness the event when our universe arose at the mandate of its Creator; yet it is a universe which holds forth to present and palpable observation the insignia of its origin. Adaptation to an end, that character with the reading and interpretation of which we have been familiar from infancy, is inscribed on it everywhere; and from the simple relations which obtain among the orbs that roll above, to the manifold and multiform relations of usefulness among the parts of animals and vegetables below, do we behold all nature instinct with the mind of a Divinity—all teeming and alive with the evidences of a God.

22. It is satisfactory to rescue this argument from the mysticism which had involved it; and, at the tribunal of experience, to obtain for it the verdict of those ordinary principles on which we judge and reason every day of our lives.

CHAPTER II.

PROOFS FROM THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUMAN MIND, AND FROM ITS RELATIONS TO EXTERNAL NATURE, FOR THE BEING AND CHARACTER OF GOD.

1. When we look to the mind singly, and with the view of finding in its constitution the evidence for a God—if we succeed at all, we shall find that, generally speaking, it is evidence of wholly another sort from that which hitherto we have been employed in contemplating. The evidence presented in the world of matter is mainly founded on combination—the combination of a number of distinct parts or circumstances, the meeting together of which subserves some end of obvious utility, and which utility would be greatly impaired, if not altogether defeated, by the want or withdrawment of any one of these circumstances. It is quite clear that the more numerous they are, the more unlikely it is that they should have met fortuitously; and hence that every addition to their number must enhance the evidence of their having met designedly and not at random, or under the direction of a purposing mind which ordered the concurrence of

so many things for the sake of that resulting and useful fulfilment which ensues from it. They might be so many as to make it the most violent of all improbabilities that they should have come together blindly or by chance, yet so as that some manifestly desirable end should be obtained by the conjunction of them. And this is the great use in theology of those complex and organic structures which so abound in the material world, and which, in proportion to their complexity, or to the vast number of separate parts and conditions that enter into the formation of them, are all the more pregnant with the evidence for a God.

2. Now this is not the kind of evidence that we should look for in the constitution or in the phenomena of the mind—that mind which many conceive to be a simple and indivisible unit. But without venturing to speculate on the substance of mind, let us take account of any of its phenomena—as, for example, the compassion that is felt on the sight of distress. We are here presented with a simple sequence of two terms—first, the perception of another's misery, and then the pity that is felt; and this is all the cognizance that we can take of it. There is here little or no combination, but of two things at most—the sight of an object and its consequent emotion, a simple succession; but which, simple though it be, well-nigh exhausts all the description that we can offer of the share which the mind has in this result. In this respect it stands widely contrasted with the share which the body, through its organ of seeing, has had in it; and perhaps there cannot a better example be given of the difference in question between the mental and the material, than when we contemplate the simple phenomenon of vision in the mind, and the anterior process of vision as carried forward and modified in that curious, elaborate, and highly complex organ, the eye—in which alone it will be found, on the principle of chances, that there is a million-fold greater amount of that evidence which is founded on combination, than is yielded by the mere apposition of these two things—first, the sight of a certain object, and then the sensibility that ensues from it. If here we have any of that evidence at all which lies in the adaptation of part to part, we have none at least of that multiple evidence which is yielded by every addition to the number of them. It will be found then, that matter far outpeers mind in that evidence for a God which is grounded on combination.

3. Yet mind, too, has an evidence of its own, though of a different sort, perhaps logically as strong, and at all events influ-

entially far more effective, than that which science has laid open in the organizations of the material world. It even admits of being stated numerically, though, when subjected to this kind of computation, it would seem to fall indefinitely short of the other; for the whole value of it cannot fitly or adequately be represented by numbers. Yet to a certain extent it can. For, going back to our former instance, by a very general law of mind, though liable at times to be disturbed and modified, the sight of distress is followed up by a sense of compassion and the desire to relieve it. Now we can imagine it to have been otherwise—that the sight of distress should be followed up by the savage delight of cruelty, and a desire to aggravate and enhance it. Or there might have been still a different law. Our nature might have been so constituted that the spectacle awakened in us no emotion whatever, but could be gazed upon with downright apathy or indifference. Here then are three varieties; and that the one out of these three should have been selected which is most accordant with our notions of a benevolent God, affords a sort of arithmetical evidence for a Being of this exalted and amiable character having had to do with the formation of our world and of those who live in it. But we shall drop this consideration—for the strength of the evidence on which we are now to enter is a thing to be felt rather than calculated. When we view the phenomena of mind in connexion with the question of a God, we cannot but feel that there is an evidence in these which outruns arithmetic, and seeks no aid from such computations as those on which we have proceeded hitherto. It seems to leave all reasoning behind it—though we cannot but think that there is a reasoning, though it may be only of one step, by which the conclusion is arrived at. The interrogations of the psalmist—He who formed the eye, shall He not see? He who planted the ear, shall He not hear? He who gave man understanding, shall He not know?—are all of them so many acts of reasoning, which require time for their utterance by the mouth, but which in the mind itself are performed with almost the speed and certainty of consciousness. When we try to assign an origin for mind and its various phenomena, we cannot but refer, as if by the tact of an immediate sympathy, to an interior mind which gave birth to this product of its own likeness, and stamped its own qualities thereupon. It might seem to be an intuition, though in reality it be an inference; and we are all the more helped to it by our sense of the utter discrepancy between mind and matter, and

our experience of the wide interval which separates all the combinations and forces of the one, whether in their results or tendencies, from all the feelings and faculties which belong to the other. If apart from the established lines of transmission, and all of which have demonstrably had a commencement, we never saw the least approximation made to an organic being by all the powers and elements of matter however blended—then most certainly, and with still greater emphasis, may it be said that we never saw, in the working of these same elements and powers, the slightest tendency or movement towards the formation, even in rudest embryo, of a thinking creature.

4. And first and foremost of all those mental phenomena, which tell most promptly and most audibly for a God, is the felt movement or voice of a conscience within us—that faculty which assumes a direction or mastery over the whole man ; and amid the wild uproar of our inferior yet powerful and headlong propensities, causes itself to be heard as one having authority. We do not say that at all times it causes itself to be obeyed ; but obedience is that to which, if it cannot enforce, it at least claims ; and the rightfulness of the claim, whether it be yielded to or not, is at least deferred to and recognised by all men. When conscience tells us what we ought, we feel that is what we owe ; or, in other words, we owe the debt, a debt of fealty and subjection, whether we pay the debt or not ; and like the creditor who perhaps cannot exact his dues, he can upbraid the debtor who withholds them, and speak to him the language of reproach and remonstrance in return for his wrong. And he can do more than reprimand : he can at one time punish our disobedience with the inflictions of remorse, just as at another he can reward our obedience with the feelings of complacency—and thus perform within our breast all the offices of a judge and of a lawgiver. We need not wonder that the felt presence of a monitor who can thus lift a voice of warning, and inflict the vengeance of an offended sovereign if we do not listen to it, should with so much force and readiness suggest the idea, and more than this, we doubt not, the conviction—the firm, yea the sound and warrantable conviction, of a God—based, too, on an *argumentum a posteriori ;* and if not the result of an inferential process, since to be a process it must consist of several steps, yet as good as this, an instant conclusion of the mind, and which comes to us as if with the speed of lightning, in the course of one rapid transition from the feeling of a judge within the breast, to the

faith of a judge and a maker who placed it there. This internal evidence outweighs in impression, and perhaps also in real and substantive validity, all the external evidence that lies in those characters of design which are so variously and voluminously inscribed on the face of the material world. It has found an access for itself to all bosoms. We have not to look abroad for it, but it is felt by each man within the little homestead of his own heart; and this theology of conscience has done more to uphold a sense of God in the world than all the theology of academic demonstration.*

5. But though conscience be the great master-phenomenon or faculty wherewith to build up a natural theism—yet is mind replete with other evidence, worthy at least of being stated, however short in practical influence of that voice within, which is the first and greatest witness for a God. Next in authority, however, to this greatest of all our vouchers for a Divinity, may be regarded those two counterpart phenomena whereof we have the undoubted experience—a very intimate and familiar experience too—we mean the happiness attendant on the exercise of good affections, and, corresponding to this, the misery attendant on the working and the indulgence of bad ones. It is not of the complacency that follows, whether the sensations or the acts of kindness, nor yet is it of the self-dissatisfaction that follows the sensations, still more the outbreakings, of malevolence and anger, that we now speak; for these, as being the sanctions wherewith conscience enforces her dictates, form an integral part of her testimony for a God; but, distinct from this, we speak of the pleasure on the one hand, and pain on the other, of the very sensations themselves—the former being sweet to the taste of the inner man, and the latter having in them the bitterness of gall and wormwood. For besides the self-approval and the remorse, both of which are retrospective, there is an immediate sweetness in the mere presence or contact of a benevolent feeling, and a bitterness, as distinct and immediate too, in the fiery agitations or brooding purposes of malice and revenge. And the same holds true of all the other virtues and their opposite vices. It is not the mere consciousness of integrity and honour which forms all the pleasure that lies in the exercise or possession of these moralities; but there is a certain ethereal and unclouded satisfaction, as if one breathed a clearer and healthier atmosphere,

* The supremacy of conscience the greatest and most influential argument for the being of God.—1 John iii. 20; John viii 9; Acts xxiii. 1; xxiv. 16.

in the moralities themselves. And in like manner, it is not the sense of self-degradation which constitutes all the discomfort that one feels in plying the low arts of deception or dishonesty; but in the very element itself, call it of fraudulency or falsehood, there is that dissonancy between the belief of the inner and the professions of the outer man, which of itself is directly adverse to the day-light and harmony of the soul. And the same holds of purity or temperance on the one hand, and the ignoble subjection of our better nature on the other, to the solicitations of a tyrant appetite—or of the contrast which obtains between the untroubled serenity of a mind that wields the mastery over all its inferior affections, and that chaos of turbulence and disorder into which the same mind is thrown when tossed and tempest-driven in the anarchy of those various passions which it is unable to control. In the peace and enjoyment of the good affections there is a very present reward, in the disquietude and agony of the evil affections there is a very present vengeance; and connecting such a regimen with the character of Him who ordained it, we should infer that we lived under the administration of a God who loved righteousness and who hated iniquity.*

6. It is obvious that were the views of an inquirer after God confined to the material world, he could infer nothing from all that he saw as to the moral, but only as to the natural attributes of its maker. There might be works both of exquisite contrivance and stupendous greatness which bespoke the power and skill of the artificer who framed them; but apart from life and mind, or in the mere system of inanimate things, where there could be no room for the display either of his regard for happiness or of his regard for virtue, of which all things below, as being without sensations and without sentiments, were alike incapable—it is obvious that we could gather no indication whatever of either the benevolence of a parent or the righteousness of a sovereign. If he lived in a house but without a family—then our only lessons could be drawn from the structure of the one, and none from his treatment of the other; or while the abundant manifestations both of strength and of intelligence might thus be given, there would still be no vestiges by which to tell either of the beneficence by which he gladdened the hearts of his creatures, or of the justice and love of virtue that

* The pleasure attendant on good affections or deeds, and the pain attendant on bad ones, form an evidence for a God who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity.—Psalm xix. 11; Prov. xi. 30; Isa. lvii. 20.

characterized his administration over them. It is only now, then, that we have entered on that department in the creation around us, whence we can infer aught as to the moral character of Him in whom it may have originated, and by whom its laws and processes may have been ordained. We can only judge of this from the way in which he deals with creatures possessed of life, or who themselves are capable, whether of the right or wrong in character. Should we discover, in the actual constitution of things, a manifest subserviency to their enjoyment; or still more, that, in general, happiness went along with rectitude, and that misery was the usual attendant upon its violations—we should hence infer a reigning benevolence or a reigning justice in the administration of the universe; but as neither of these perfections in the abstract could, any more than an abstract wisdom, have given rise to a concrete world—we should reason from a character to a being, and so arrive at the conclusion of a wise and just and benevolent Creator, by whom these various perfections were realized.

7. We have already, in looking to the mental constitution by itself, or singly to one mind as apart from its relations either to all other minds, or to external nature—we have already taken notice of certain principles or tendencies within us, from whence we might infer the greater likelihood of our having proceeded from the hands of a good and righteous, rather than from the hands of an unjust or a malevolent God. The most decisive indication of this is given by the lessons of conscience, which might well be regarded as the laws of Him who planted this monitor in every bosom, and as interpretative therefore of the will, and so of the moral nature of the Lawgiver. And, generally, it will be allowed that these lessons are on the side of humanity and truth and uprightness and temperance, which characteristics might be carried upward to Him who deposited this natural law in the heart of man, and which not only serves for the authoritative guidance of our conduct, but on which, as upon an inscribed tablet, we may read what be the virtues of the Godhead. Its dictates and its prohibitions are alike the indices of what He loves, and of what He hates; and they tell us at once of His preference for all that is good, and His antipathy to all that is evil. And besides the evidence which lies in the mandates of conscience, there is a distinct and additional evidence in the inherent pleasure of the acts or affections which it enjoins, and the inherent misery of the acts or affections which

it forbids; and this over and above the complacency which attends our review and retrospect of the one, and that agonizing remorse which attends our review and retrospect of the other. We have thus a multiple evidence in favour of the love which God bears to virtue—first, in the biddings of conscience; secondly, in the sweets of an approving retrospect; and thirdly, in the present agreeableness to the taste of the inner man, whether of the deeds or the desires of righteousness. We have the precise counterparts of these, and which combine into an evidence alike strong for the hatred God bears to wickedness. This triple sanction for the observance of morality on the one hand, and against the violation of it on the other, speaks forcibly for the kind of regimen under which we sit, and so for the character of Him who hath ordained it—the regimen or administration of a God who is the patron of all virtue, and of all vice the enemy and the avenger.

8. But these indications brighten and multiply on our hands, when, instead of looking to one mind apart, we look on the relations between mind and mind, or to their reciprocal influences and bearings on each other. For if goodwill on the one hand be a pleasurable sensation, alike so on the other is the gratitude that is awakened by it. If there be a felt comfort and clearness in the sense that one has of his own integrity, there is a pleasure also on the part of others in the sentiments of respect and confidence which they award to it; and thence again a tertiary pleasure in the breast of him who, to the enjoyment which lies in the consciousness of his own worth and honours, superadds the enjoyment which lies in the esteem of his fellows; and this again reflected upon them in his cordial acknowledgment for their expressions of reverence and regard, whether rendered to him by assembled citizens in some formal and collective testimony, or showered along his daily and familiar path in the salutations of the street and of the market-place. There is altogether a prodigious amount of happiness in the play and reciprocation of these social virtues, in the demonstrations of mutual regard, whether amid the settled affections of home, or even on the wayside, as evinced by the passing smiles and recognitions of our daily companionship. And there is a like multiplying and repeating process in the counterpart misery which is worked off throughout every aggregate of human beings by the acting and re-acting of the bad affections—by looks of mutual hostility or disdain; by violence or injustice on the one hand, and the fierce

outcries of resentment on the other; by the war even of words only, the strife of tongues, apart from all injury either to property or person; by the heartburnings of emulation among families; the manifestations of contempt or hatred; the dark and brooding purposes of revenge. There is enough in moral elements alone to make a heaven or a hell of two distinct societies; and if our nature be so constituted, as that universal virtue would give rise to an earthly paradise, and universal vice to an earthly pandemonium, let reason tell the greater of the two likelihoods, whether we have been originally fashioned by the hands of a righteous or by the hands of an unrighteous God.

9. And this seems the right place for considering the difficulty under which natural theology lies, when called to account for the miseries of life, and when triumphantly asked by sceptics and unbelievers—why, under a regimen of perfect benevolence, there should be any misery at all. We cannot offer a full or absolute reply to this question; but we think it can be far more satisfactorily disposed of than by the reply which is commonly given. There are many who, as Paley and others, attempt to strike a sort of arithmetical balance between the good and ill of our world—between the amount of its enjoyments on the one hand, and its sufferings on the other; and who, in the great superiority or overplus of the former, would ground their vindication of the Divine benevolence in the face of all those undoubted pains and calamities that flesh is heir to. We do not feel the strength of this reasoning. In the first place, we are not sure of the computation. We should imagine it exceedingly difficult, nay impracticable, to form aught like a precise estimate, first of the felicities, and then of the distresses of life; and then to take the summation of each so as to come at the difference betwixt them. We have no faith in a calculation grounded on data of so much uncertainty: and even though we had—though presented with demonstrative evidence for a vast excess on the brighter side of this comparison—the mystery were far from being dissipated, or the difficulty which has now been started were far from set at rest. The question would perpetually recur —Why, under a government of boundless power and perfect goodness, there should be a deduction at all from this boasted aggregate of happiness by any wo or any wretchedness whatever? And this deep enigma is tenfold aggravated by the awful mystery of death—that sweeping and universal law of mortality, which cuts short the fairest promises of humanity, and consigns

to the hideousness of the grave all the bliss and beauty of its successive generations.

10. But though we cannot resolve the enigma, we can greatly alleviate it, by taking for the basis of our solution a wider view than the calculators we have now spoken of generally entertain of the character of God. They for the most part proceed on His benevolence alone—as if this were the single attribute of the Divine nature. Instead of which let us imagine for a moment that the attribute of righteousness were superadded; and then see whether this hypothesis would not furnish the materials for a likelier explanation of that phenomenon—the existence of evil, which has so puzzled and perplexed the philosophers of all ages. It will give substance to the hypothesis, and dispose us to entertain it as a reality, if we view the phenomenon not merely in itself, but view it in connexion with its proximate and at the same time its palpable causes. We shall not pretend to any absolute solution for the origin of moral evil—though, we think, it can easily be shown that, while we fear it must ever remain a difficulty that cannot fully be unriddled on this side of death, yet the evidences, whether of the natural or the Christian theology, remain unshaken by it. The first origin of evil, viewed in all its generality, that is, as comprehensive both of the moral and the physical—this, we fear, is a problem which, as related to the perfections and purposes of the uncreated mind, lies beyond the limits of our *terra cognita*. We cannot trace this progression upward to the throne of the Divinity, and so as wholly to dissipate the obscuration which lies on His character and ways. But we can trace it upward a certain way, and so as to ascertain at least one of its sequences, both the terms of which lie within the confines of our daily and familiar observation. We cannot say why it is that evil, in its generic acceptation, as including both the moral and physical, should have been permitted to enter within the precincts of the universe of God. But it is a great thing to say, that the physical, in the vast majority and amount of it, comes in the train of the moral; or, in other words, that the sufferings of humanity are mainly resolvable into the sins of humanity: and though we cannot just say that if there was no sin there would be no suffering, certain it is that if a perfect and universal virtue were to reign upon earth, not only would the miseries of earth be indefinitely lessened, but the best enjoyments of heaven, if not in degree at least in quality, be generally realized. The misery viewed in itself might be a phenome-

non wholly inexplicable ; but it throws a flood of light upon the question when viewed in connexion with the proximate cause which gives it birth—the vicious and distempered affections to which, both in greatest bulk and in greatest number, the chief discomforts of our existence are owing. The capabilities of the world to make a virtuous species happy, do of themselves attest and vindicate the benevolence of God ; and if this object be defeated because we are depraved, this only proves that while God loves the happiness of His children, He loves their virtue more. It but superadds the attribute of righteousness to His attribute of goodness, and tells us that we are the subjects of a Parent's discipline as well as of a Parent's care.

11. When man provides for his own good by the exercise of his own skill, as in the building of a house or the construction of any other work of art and utility, we are apt, in accounting for the existence of such a product, to stop short at the wisdom of man, and omit all higher reference to the wisdom of a God who furnished him with his various faculties and powers, and made him capable of all the devisings he can perform by means of his fitly endowed mind, as well as of all the doings that he can perform by means of his exquisitely fashioned hand. But when any good is provided for, not by a reasoning process on our part, but by means of a simple and headlong propensity, we are not so apt in this case to lose sight of the wisdom of God in the wisdom of man. This might be illustrated by the works of inferior animals which we do not accredit with the sagacity or foresight put forth by ourselves—as when instead of a man building a house, it is the case of a bird building its nest, or of a bee constructing, and with all the nicety of mathematics, its hexagonal cells—which we ascribe to the promptings of a blind instinct, and not to the anticipation or mechanic skill of these little artificers. This instinct on the part of creatures unable to care or calculate for themselves, as we do, we are more ready to carry upward to a God who cares and calculates for them, and so provides them with all the instincts which are necessary for their wants. The inference is quite a right one that we make in regard to these lower animals ; but it is not right that we should fail to make it in regard to man—for his higher faculties in truth bear all the more emphatic and enhanced testimony to that God who has given him more understanding than the beasts of the field, and made him wiser than the fowls of heaven.

12. But so prolific and overpassing is the argument for a God,

that we can accommodate it even to this tendency, erroneous though it be, and so cause it to overcome even the infirmity of our own wayward judgments. Man has not been left to himself, any more than the inferior animals, for the care of his own preservation; and instead of this interest being altogether confided to his own wisdom or his own vigilance, he too has been fitted with a number of unreflecting instincts and appetites, but for the impulse of which he would inevitably perish. There cannot be a more palpable exhibition of this than is afforded by the appetite of hunger, which both reminds and urges man by its periodic calls to the food that is needful for his sustenance, and seems planted there to serve the office of a monitor, who might prompt him at right times to take of that aliment, on the neglect of which for a few days there would ensue his dissolution. And the same holds true of his mental as well as his bodily affections. When danger threatens, it is not enough either for escape or for protection, that under the government of reason he should adopt the right measures by which to shun or to resist it; but whether to wing his flight or to stimulate his wakeful diligence, there is inserted within his bosom the affection of fear. When an infant is born, it is not enough that nature has provided the material nourishment which keeps it in life; but for the indispensable safety of the little stranger, nature has also planted the strongest of her instincts in the heart of its mother, who under the impulse of an affection that never wearies, ceases not day nor night to tend and watch over it. When the patriot of high emprise, by the darings and deeds of heroism, achieves the deliverance of his country, it is not enough that reason shall calculate the merit or decree the reward; but the instant sentiments of gratitude and admiration are made to arise in every heart, and as instant a feeling of triumph in the breast of the hero when the loud echo of a nation's applause has reached him. It is thus, that if we go in detail over all the emotions or special affections of our nature, we shall find out a final cause for the establishment of every one of them, and so the uses of a mental economy might bespeak the design of its formation as clearly and decisively as do the uses of a material framework. A mother's affection surely tells as significantly in this way as does a mother's milk; or the fear which speeds the footsteps of an animal from the pursuit of its enemy, as do the muscles which execute the movement, or the anger which rises and repels on the moment of injury, as does the natural armour wherewith it

meets the aggression, or the covering which serves as a shield to defend them from external violence. Neither the individual nor the species, whether of man or the inferior animals, could long subsist without these manifold constitutional tendencies which owe neither their end nor their origin to the wisdom of the creature, but which, subserving as they do the obvious purposes of safety or enjoyment, must be referred to the wisdom of a God.*

13. When one takes food, it is generally at the instigation of hunger, and without any prospective regard to the good of his animal system. In this matter, then, there can be no foresight ascribed to him who feels the appetite, but it is altogether to be ascribed to Him who inserted the appetite; or, in other words, the benefit of this law in our physical economy is in no part due to the wisdom of man; and in as far as it indicates design, must must be wholly referred to the wisdom of a God. But this consideration admits of being extended from a provision made for the good of the individual, to a provision made for the complex and general good of society. Take for an example, and as a counterpart to the general law of hunger or appetite for food, the almost as general law of an appetite for wealth, up to the measure at least of every man's fit and fair opportunities of realizing it. Under the impulse of this affection, we see each man intent on the prosecution of his own personal interest and advancement, making this a distinct and separate object of very strenuous exertion; and pursuing it, not merely with all the force of an instinctive desire, but often with an intelligence and reach of anticipation which prove that the very highest powers of the understanding have been enlisted in the service. Still the anticipator shoots no farther onward than to his own private and peculiar advantage—to the object either of providing a competency or building up a fortune for himself and his family. He does not think of the ulterior good which he and millions of others in the same walk of business or industry along with him are at the time doing for society at large, any more than in the act of eating, he thinks of the indispensable benefit he thereby renders to his corporeal framework. The gratification of his hunger is the terminating object in the one case, and the gratification of his appetite for gain is the terminating object in the

* As the beneficial instincts of the inferior animals prove the wisdom and beneficence of a God, the intelligence wherewith man is gifted enhances the proof.—Job xxxv. 11; xxxii. 8.

other. Than these he looks no farther; but there is one who does look farther, and in the posterior or remoter benefits which result from each of them, He makes signal demonstration of a prescient and a purposing mind, whether in building up the structure of a single man, or forming from an aggregate of men the structure of a human society. Each individual of that vast assemblage who compose a populous city, or a mighty empire, or the whole family of man, concentrates almost all his attention and all his efforts on his own single prosperity; and from such a multitude of independent forces, each having a separate aim and direction from all the rest, one might have anticipated nothing else than a perfect chaos of conflicting interests, out of which it were impossible to form an organization that could work harmoniously towards any great and beneficent result, or with such a principle of vigour and endurance that it could last for a single day. Now, what is the fact? How does it fare with the general benefit of society, when each individual member of it is thus left to grasp and struggle for his own special benefit? Economists can tell, that with but the maintenance of justice between man and man, the greatest economic wellbeing of a community is secured, by each being at liberty to improve his own condition and better his own circumstances as he may; and that the mechanism of trade, with its various and complicated interests and numerous springs of activity, never moves so prosperously, or works off so great an amount of opulence and comfort as under this system of perfect liberty, when each aspirant in the busy walks of merchandise is allowed full scope for his own energies and his own views; or, what is tantamount to this, when nature is left spontaneous and unfettered to the free development of her own principles of action. It is certainly marvellous that such should be the result, while each of the mighty host of individuals who unconsciously helps it forward, looks not beyond his own little sphere, with no higher aim than the amelioration of his own state, the sustenance, or it may be the aggrandizement, of his own family. And the abortive attempts of human legislation to improve on this beautiful system, when by its restrictions or its bounties in commerce, it only distempers and mars what it lays its hands upon, strikingly sets off the superior wisdom of Him who is the great, the original architect both of nature and of society, and the profound skilfulness of whose ordinations is never more convincingly shown than by the mis-

chief which is done when they are thwarted and interfered with by the impotent wisdom of man.*

14. So much for the economic good of society. But there are other great and high interests which are provided for in like manner, and that by means of affections which speculators would fain root up, but that fortunately nature is too strong for them —such as the relative affections, which cosmopolites would extirpate to make way for their universal benevolence, but which, both by their strength and concentration, add prodigiously, though in separate family groups, to the amount of human happiness; and the sentiments of reverence for station and rank, denounced by revolutionists and radicals, but which are natural sentiments notwithstanding, and are of most powerful efficacy for the cement and preservation of social order; and the proprietary feelings, without which industry would fold her arms, and earth's fertile territory would be throughout a wilderness, instead of yielding in the produce of her reclaimed and cultured, because her appropriated acres, a sustenance, in every land emerged from barbarism, to millions of civilized men;—these various mental propensities are not the artificial products of any human discipline, but parts of an original and universal nature, which, looked to in connexion with their undoubted effects on the order and prosperity of every commonwealth, strikingly demonstrate the superior wisdom of God—and all the more justified by its contrast with the folly of those reckless innovators who seek to change both the constitution of man and the constitution of society, in their ruinous and abortive attempts to establish an optimism of their own.

15. There are other and most interesting walks even in this mental department of natural theology, on which we find it impossible to enter, and in which, as everywhere, we meet with fresh evidences for a God. At present we can say nothing of man's intellectual powers, or the adaptation of these to external nature. We are not able to overtake the subject; and for this best of reasons, the subject is inexhaustible. It partakes of the infinity of the Godhead, who has peopled immensity with the wonders of His hand, and imprinted the vestiges both of His wisdom and power on a workmanship that we are wholly unable to explore, either in its variety or its boundlessness. We can

* The instincts and affections of men work out beneficial results, with the production of which neither the reason nor the moral principle of men could have been intrusted.—Ps. lxxvi. 10: Isa. x. 7.

deal but in parts or specimens of this high argument—for truly there is not a science, not a subject of human thought or observation, on which a natural theology might not be grafted. In every new field that we can set our foot upon, we can gather new contributions to the evidence for a God. For doing justice to our theme, we would need to traverse the whole encyclopædia of human learning, and even then should we fall infinitely short of an adequate demonstration—as far short as is the collective and accumulated wisdom of our species from the conceptions of Him whose government reaches from eternity to eternity, and the arm of whose might it was that created and upholds all worlds. But there is not merely the grandeur of the outline, there is the density and variety and microscopic exquisiteness of the filling up, which forces us to desist from an enterprise so baffling, as a full representation of Him who, in the expressive language of Robert Hall, subordinates all that is great, exalts all that is little, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE DEGREE OF LIGHT WHICH NATURAL THEOLOGY CASTS, AND THE UNCERTAINTY IN WHICH IT LEAVES BOTH THE PURPOSES OF GOD AND THE FUTURE DESTINIES OF MAN.

1. THERE are many special purposes of which both the means and the fulfilment come under our observation, and which it is impossible therefore to mistake—as of our teeth for the mastication of food, and of our hands for the manipulations of art and industry, and of our feet both for support and locomotion, and of the various senses whether in man or the inferior animals, and of the thousand objective things which subserve their accommodation—as the light, and the air, and the fertilizing showers, and the manifold sorts of aliment suited to every sort of creature, and in which God hath not left Himself without a witness. In all these cases the design announces itself, and might be gathered from an act of inspection—when both the thing in question, and the use it is put to, are made to pass before our eyes. And innumerable are such things within the field of observation, and which we confidently refer to an adequate

wisdom and power, and in the vast majority of instances to a beneficence too on the part of a living and intelligent Deity.

2. But it is of importance to remark that there may be innumerable palpable evidences of design in nature, proving that it has emanated from a designing cause; and yet with all this, we may be in utter ignorance of the great and general design of creation, or of what may be termed the policy of the Creator. You may thus see at one glance what is the light and what the darkness of natural theology, as much light as conducts us to a God, but as much darkness as leaves us in profoundest ignorance of His counsels, or of the drift and consummation of His ways. We know what the specific designs of our eyes, and our teeth, and the various organs and parts of our bodies are—all of them designs which imply a designer. But we know not—Nature, at least, gives us no information—of the design of God in the creation of man; and after all that we can explore and ascertain on the field of the Divine workmanship, the enigma of man's birth and being is still unresolved. And yet man is covered all over with the bright inscriptions of a Divinity that has had to do in the whole of his make and mechanism. We have thus the most overpowering evidence that God is; but there is no evidence within the reach of our natural faculties that can dissipate the obscurity which shrouds the unsearchable counsels of the Deity.*

3. On a field of battle, we might be able to read the design, and to trace a designer's hand, in every warlike instrument that we meet, yet not be in the least helped by this to understand the policy of the war. And so might we be able to recognise the marks and indications of an artist's skill throughout every section in the territory of creation, yet remain altogether unable to comprehend the one great purpose of creation on the whole. We might assign in thousands what be the special and subordinate ends of the many obvious contrivances which we see everywhere around us, yet be as profoundly ignorant as before of God's end in the creation of the world. We can tell the meaning of every part and organ in the curious workmanship of man's body, and yet be unable to say why man himself has been brought forth to fret his little hour on the stage of being, and after a

* The clear and decisive evidences of design which creation presents in thousands of particular instances, perfectly compatible with the utmost ignorance on our part of the general design of creation.—Rom. xi. 33; Psalm cxlv. 3; cxxxix. 6; Isa. xl. 28; Job xxxvii. 5; v. 9.

few brief evolutions there, to sink again into the nonentity from which he was taken.

4. Nor do the discoveries of science serve to alleviate the mystery—whether their effect be to lay before our view a greater number of worlds, or to give us a more thorough insight into the mechanism and processes of the world that we ourselves occupy. If anything they but enhance the mystery, and make the purposes of the Supreme Being more inscrutable than before—just as the policy of an empire, because a higher, might prove a more baffling study than the politics of the town in which we live. The telescope which announces to us the reality of these distant worlds, casts no light upon their moral government. It tells us of a larger sovereignty, but gives no access to the methods or the ends of its administration, and so places the mind of the sovereign all the more hopelessly beyond the ken of our faculties. The revelations of astronomical science make us no wiser in theology than before, unless indeed they teach what they ought, the wisdom of humility, and lead us so to acquiesce in our own ignorance, that we shall either patiently wait the disclosures of futurity, or thankfully receive the informations of a higher wisdom than our own.

5. And if the expansion of our knowledge beyond its former limits bring no positive accession to our understanding of the ways of God—as little can our deeper penetration into the arcana and constitution of the things within our reach. The object of all physical investigation is to ascertain the order of those sequences which take place in nature, and which land in certain given results. We might in this way come to the discovery of many exquisite contrivances—such, for example, as the mechanism of the eye, from which we must irresistibly infer that the hand of a contriver was employed in setting up this apparatus for the purposes of seeing. And we can extend the same inference to a countless number of other purposes—of which we can establish beyond all doubt that they were conceived by a master-mind, and executed with the skill and ability of a master. Yet, as we have already said, though we can read all these purposes with perfect distinctness, and refer them with the most perfect confidence to an intelligent designer, to a God, who, for instance, in the creation of man, meant him to be a creature who could see and hear and hold converse with his fellows, and perform the various manipulations which he can execute with his hands, and be able to transport himself from any one place to any other

whither his feet can carry him. Though we are very sure that the God who made him had all these purposes regarding man, and has carried them into effect—yet the great and general purpose of his creation remains an enigma still; and none of the physical sciences, not even the physics of the mind, though carried to the uttermost limits of possible discovery, can help us to resolve it. The mystery is tenfold aggravated by the thousand ills which are scattered along the journey of human life, and, above all, by its appalling termination in the agonies and the cruel separations and the dark and revolting hideousness of death. No philosophy, however searching, and however successful her search into laws and processes, can lift the veil which hangs over the policy that leads to results like these. Nature is unable to comprehend the meaning or object of such a regimen; and natural theology utterly fails in her attempts to resolve what in Scripture is significantly termed the mystery of God.

6. We are obviously bordering on that great question which has exercised and baffled the highest powers of speculation amongst the philosophers of all ages—we mean the origin of evil—a subject on which we have presented our own views elsewhere,* and to these we can only refer. We attempt no positive solution of this question; but are far from regarding the conjectural solutions of Leibnitz and others as altogether worthless. It is enough for our purpose that they might be the just and true solutions, *for aught we know.* It is thus that the objection, grounded on this difficulty against the religious system in any form, if not mastered and overcome, is at least neutralized. And so our hypothesis, even though unproved, if only not disproved, might be of service in theology. It may at least be as good as the infidel hypothesis opposed to it, and so give us a perfect warrant to withdraw from the hypothetical region altogether. We therefore gladly decline the task of soaring aloft among the mysteries of God's universal government; and, quitting these transcendental themes as matters too high for us, would now limit our inquiries to such probabilities, if not such certainties, as are within our reach—and from which we might surmise, perhaps even discover, the present will and purposes of God respecting both the present duties and the future destiny of man.

* See "Select Works," vol. v. p. 414.

7. Into the future destinies of man there would be no room for inquiry if the period of our conscious existence were to terminate at death. We see all that happens to man in this world; and if this be the alone theatre on which he expatiates, we have but to trace his brief history upon earth, in order to ascertain whatever might befall him, from the hour of his first appearance on the platform of visible things to the final consummation of his being when he is laid in the sepulchre. If death be the ultimate extinction of every human being, there were no call for argument or speculation on the subject of his future destiny, unless by this be meant the future destiny of the species, or of men taken in their collective and social capacity—a theme of fond anticipation to those cosmopolites and philosophical statesmen who speak to us of the perfectibility of our race, and the triumphs both of knowledge and virtue in the ages which are to come. But this is not our theme. It is not of the coming fortunes of the species that we now inquire, but of men taken individually; and we repeat that such inquiry would be a pure work of observation, not a question that required the exercise of our reasoning faculties, in order to estimate its probabilities and its likelihoods, if man, in the act of expiring or of resigning his life, resigned it irrevocably—thenceforth to remain for ever unconscious as the clods of the valley, or as the dust out of which he was taken. Under such an economy there might rest a deep enigma on the purposes of God, or policy of the Divine administration, in thus calling forth the successive generations of men to strut their little hour on the fleeting scene of mortality, and then fall back into the arms of everlasting silence. But however difficult to dispose of this mystery in the government of God, there would be no more difficulty in summing up the whole fortunes of man from the beginning to the end of his ephemeral existence, than to assign any of those historical certainties which occur within the limits of sense and observation.

8. By our very inquiry, then, into the degree of light which natural theology casts on the future destinies of man, we presuppose the likelihood of his abiding existence as a conscious being on the other side of death; and this suggests a preliminary question on the degree of that likelihood; or, on the strength of our reasons for believing in the duration of the vital principle, after that, by this great catastrophe, it has been removed from all human observation in this world—or, in other words, should we make it a question, not of subsequent only, but of eternal

duration, it resolves itself into the familiar and well-known question of the immortality of the soul. Now, apart from revelation, and on the supposition that we had no other tribunal before which to try and to decide this initial question than that of natural reason, still we should be disposed to make natural theology the chief, or rather the only arbiter thereupon. We are aware of other arguments being employed in behalf of the soul's immortality than those which are founded on the consideration of God as the wise and righteous governor of men. There is besides a certain physical argument on which both philosophers and theologians have laid a greater stress in their reasoning on the subject than we ever found ourselves able to sympathize with. We feel no such confidence as is expressed by many of them in the distinction which they allege between the nature of a spiritual and that of a corporeal substance—the one simple, uncompounded, and therefore indestructible, so as to retain its powers and properties entire after the dissolution of the body; the other, even though not annihilated, yet changing all its sensible properties, and assuming a wholly new character by the mere disintegration of its parts, as the material framework of man when it is deserted by that spirit which both animates and preserves it, and is resolved by the power of corruption into the dust of the sepulchre. We confess that the demonstrations of those who reason thus upon the mere physics of the mind, and tell of the necessary and natural connexion which subsists between the immaterial and the immortal, have made little or no impression upon our understandings. It is obvious that if fitted to work in any the conviction of a future state, they should tell alike on the judgments of a religionist and of an atheist. For ourselves, in a matter which we conceive to be so utterly beyond the cognizance of man as that of a necessary connexion between the natural constitution of the mind and its eternal duration, we have no confidence in the judgment of either, and feel inclined to rest the determination of this question, not in any degree upon physical, but altogether upon moral and theological considerations.

9. The first of these arguments is grounded on that general law of adaptation which is observable throughout all nature, and on which the theology of nature rests one of her strongest inferences for a wise and intelligent Maker of all things. The most important of these adaptations are those which obtain between the affections and wants of the subjective living creature,

and those objective counterparts of external nature by which he is surrounded, and in the midst of which he is placed. For example, we have light for the eyes, and an atmosphere for the lungs, and sound emanating from a number of elastic bodies by a pathway of aerial vibrations to the organ of hearing; and food of various tastes for the palate as well as the general properties of satiating the appetite of hunger, and yielding nutriment and support to the animal economy; and a number of distinct fitnesses, far greater than can possibly be recounted, between the inhabitants of different climes and different elements, and their respective fields of occupation—as the wings of birds and the fins of fishes for expatiating in the several provinces which have been assigned to them; and manifold other congruities which it were impossible to sum up, and of which therefore we shall only give another example in the relation that obtains between the kind of digestive apparatus on the one hand, and the kind of aliment that is suited to it—the creature who is thus endowed being at the same time furnished with such teeth as are best fitted for the mastication of its appropriate food, and such claws as are best fitted for laying hold of it. Now these are all present or contemporaneous adaptations—or adaptations between the objective and the subjective, as they exist together in time. But besides these there are prospective adaptations—as in the case of the fœtus, which is not only provided with an apparatus for its nourishment in this its first state, but with an embryo apparatus also, which, of no present use, is destined for the purposes of nourishment and support in its next state of being; and likewise in the case of the child during the first months of his infancy, whose teeth are then buried in their sockets, when they would obstruct his reception of the aliment suited to that early period, but are there reserved till the time of that indispensable service which, after their growth and development, they have to perform in using the aliment of a future period of existence. Now, analogous to this, are there no present faculties in man of no use, or at least of no commensurate use here, and which would prove to have been utterly waste and meaningless, if provided with no adequate object for their exercise on the other side of death? Do there not exist, even in the mind of a most unlettered peasant, now dormant capacities for all the sciences; and in his heart, though overborne here by the influences of sense and time, the germs of such a love as angels are said to feel, and such a virtue as reigns, we are told, on high among the

choirs and companies of the celestial? It is not so with the inferior animals, among whom there is an actual fulness of enjoyment up to the measure and capacity of their actual powers of enjoyment. We see no example of a waste feeling or waste faculty among them; but each, whether it be a bodily organ or an instinctive desire, is provided with an accurate counterpart that meets and fills it up in the objects within reach of surrounding nature. Not so with man, who would be an anomaly in creation if, with his interminable longings, his powers of endless acquisition and improvement, his indefinite, but here unsatiated conceptions after higher things, and the palpable inadequacy of all that is here below to meet the appetencies of a mind that heaves ambitiously upward to larger degrees both of knowledge and enjoyment than can possibly be realized on this side of death —we say it were a violent exception to the great and general law of adaptation between the objective and the subjective, if no futurity on the other side of death were in reserve for a creature of such boundless and restless, and yet unappeased desires, in which they might meet with their commensurate objects, and have the full gratification of them. That the creature man should be endowed with capacities and desires, and yet be left unprovided with objects whereon to exercise or to indulge them, were a sort of half-formed or unfinished economy, most unlike to all that we can observe in every other department of nature or experience, and most incongruous with all our notions of that wisdom which is so discernible in all creation besides, as one of the best established while also one of the highest of the natural attributes of the Godhead.*

10. This then is our first argument for the immortality of the soul. Our second, which we have always regarded as the stronger of the two, hinges also on a previous theology—drawn, however, not as the other is, from any of the natural, but from the moral attributes of the Godhead. We have ever thought that our clearest and most confident notions of the divine character were obtained through the medium of the conscience, which, as being at once the teacher and commander of righteousness within the breast, ushers in at once not the idea only, but a positive conviction of the righteousness of Him who placed it there. It is this sense of a righteous Lawgiver which sug-

* The first argument for the immortality of the soul is grounded on the general law of adaptation, which would be violated if the boundless desires and capacities of men were not provided with the objects of a future and eternal state.—Eccles. iii. 21.

gests so promptly and so powerfully the apprehension that a day of retribution is awaiting us. We call it apprehension; for any views we have of a future state of recompense stand infinitely less related to our hopes than to our fears. So that, speaking generally, indeed I might say universally, it is not because we are looking forward to the reward of our virtues that we anticipate an existence beyond the grave; but because we are looking forward to the punishment of our vices and the conscious misdeeds of our life and history in the world. Our prospects of immortality, as viewed in the light of nature, are associated with the dread of an avenging Deity, and not with the confident expectation, either of forgiveness, or far less of positive favour at His hand; and this because we view Him as a God of justice, and, at the same time, have a deeply-seated conviction within the evil of our hearts and the evil of our ways. And if fear be a more vividly and sensibly felt emotion than hope, then, should the former and not the latter be the avenue through which the notion of its own immortality takes possession of the soul—if this do not give a stronger conviction of its truth, it will at least give a far stronger impression of it, and so enlist the whole man all the more readily and earnestly on the side of practical religion.

11. But there is another consideration of some force in this argument taken from the justice of God. He will not only vindicate His own cause by the punishment of those transgressions which man commits against Himself—and this we conceive to be that suggestion of conscience which, far the most powerfully of all others, awakens in the heart both the faith and the fear of immortality; but He also, as righteous Governor of the human family, will vindicate and redress every wrong which man commits against his fellows—bringing every question which death had left unfinished in this world to its final, which under a regimen of justice must be tantamount to its rightful termination in another. This, too, helps to sustain our belief in a future state. There are innumerable ills, whether in the walks of business or the recesses of domestic life, inflicted either by fraud or force, on many a helpless and undeserving sufferer, which never meet with reparation here, and of which therefore, we naturally imagine that there will be a reckoning and a settlement hereafter. The cry of the oppressed on earth reaches heaven's throne, and enters into the ears of Him who sitteth thereon; and by whose coming awards we expect that the ap-

petency of our moral nature for justice will at length be satisfied. It is thus that the sense of right and wrong in every breast, if not the great originator, has been the great upholder of natural theology in the world—insomuch that to it, the faculty of conscience, we mainly owe the two great articles of its creed. It is this conscience, as we have repeatedly affirmed, which tells most audibly of a God; and to its forebodings also are we mainly indebted for the faith of immortality in all ages. These two great lessons may have been given by revelation at the first; but it is not the reasoning of the schools, it is the universal voice of conscience which has reiterated and kept them alive throughout the whole family of man from generation to generation.*

12. And here, too, we cannot fail to recognise in our attempt to establish the second of these doctrines what we have already found in our treatment of the first of them—the great argumentative importance of taking along with us the justice of God as well as His benevolence, when reasoning on any subject in theology wherewith the divine character has to do. We had lately occasion to animadvert on the extreme difficulty of reconciling the miseries of human life with the goodness of the Deity, if, restricting our attention to His goodness alone, we keep out of sight His righteousness and holiness and truth. For how is it that those reasoners proceed who make no account of these latter attributes, and look on the one perfection of goodness or tenderness or parental affection as the all in all of our Father who is in heaven? Why, they have recourse to arithmetic. They institute a calculation upon the subject, and on their respective summations of all the ills of life and all its enjoyments, profess to make out such a preponderance of the good over the evil, as sufficiently to vindicate the benevolence of God, and this in midst of all the sufferings to which humanity is exposed. We shall not repeat what we have said on the extreme uncertainty and precariousness of such an argument. But we bid you recollect in what way the reasoning is extricated and placed on a surer and firmer basis—when we take a fuller view of the Divine character, and admit into our reckoning the truth and justice of God, as well as His loving-kindness and tender

* The moral argument for the immortality of man—the strongest of all within the compass of the light of nature, pointing as it does to a future state for the reparation of all the injuries of man towards God, or of men towards each other.—Eccles. xii. 14; xi. 9; Matt. vi. 19, 20; Isa. xi. 9.

mercy. It makes all the difference which there is between entire and mutilated premises—the one leading to a stable, and the other to a most lame and impotent conclusion. For, let us take the entire instead of the partial view of the Godhead, and then take the undoubted phenomenon along with us—that various and manifold as the distresses of life are, they in their vast majority and amount are referable to moral causes—that if men cease to be wicked, all wretchedness and wo would in a great measure be banished from society—and that, such are the physical capabilities of our world for making a virtuous species happy, if the character of heaven were re-established upon earth, the blessedness of heaven would be forthwith realized. Thus if we take a sufficiently complex and comprehensive view of the economy under which we sit, and of all the elements which are concerned in it, we shall clear our way through difficulties that were otherwise inexplicable—in so far, at least, that instead of a hopeless and impracticable enigma, we shall arrive at an approximate solution, with enough of likelihood to establish a clear preference over all the infidel theories which are opposed to it. And the explanation is, that God loves the happiness of His creatures, but loves their virtues more; and though a God of love, who rejoices over the face of a smiling creation, He is also a God of righteousness, whose paramount demand is for the moral integrity of all His offspring; and who, in the exercise of a parental discipline, lets fall the displeasure of His offended justice on the children of disobedience.

13. Such, then, is the difficulty attendant on one treatment of the first great doctrine in natural theology—the doctrine of a God; and such is the method of being helped out of it. And there is a difficulty attendant on the very same treatment of its second great doctrine—the doctrine of man's immortality; and our method of being helped out of it is also the same. We do not see how it is possible to make out a theological argument for the immortality of the soul, if we have nothing else but the single attribute of the Divine goodness to go upon. Nevertheless, many of those who take this defective view of the character of God do make the attempt, and in this way they fail. They first reason for His goodness from the numerous beatitudes of human life, and then tell us of the many ills also to which it is exposed, and to repair which this same goodness requires that there shall be a futurity where compensation shall be made for all our sufferings, and where sorrow and sighing shall for ever

flee away. You will perceive the frailty of this argument in that it involves a *petitio principii*, and is chargeable with the vice of reasoning in a circle. If, on the one hand, we look to the goodness alone of the God who is above, and that apart from His truth and justice; and on the other, look to the phenomena alone of happiness and misery below, and that apart from the causes that gave them birth—then from the phenomena thus read and thus interpreted, which present us with but a limited and imperfect happiness, and on which there lies the burden of many and most grievous exceptions, we can only infer a goodness alike limited and alike imperfect, and burdened, too, with all the exceptions which are forced upon our observation in the scene before our eyes. To take up with a larger goodness than this, and thence to infer that there must be a future state beyond the grave, where all the ills of our present state are redressed and rectified, is purely gratuitous. We have no right to assume a higher goodness than precisely that which things present led us to infer; and if things present warrant the inference of such a goodness, then it were a contradiction to say that there is aught in things present which should require the vindication of it. It must be obviously a goodness which overlaps the phenomena of our visible world, or a greater goodness than that which we should conclude from the phenomena themselves —it must be from the excess only of the one goodness over the other that we can reason for a better and a happier world than we now occupy—a world freed from the distempers which vex and agonize the life that now is. There must be a flaw in such an argumentation, by which we infer a goodness from the phenomena of a world that we do see—which goodness, at the same time, is so incongruous with these phenomena, that for its vindication we must have recourse to a world which we do not see. There is something illogical in this alternation—first from given premises to a conclusion, and then from that conclusion back again, in order to extend and rectify the premises whence it has been drawn. There is an infirmity in the whole of this argument, but an infirmity which altogether arises from the confinement of our view to the one attribute of benevolence, as if by itself it constituted the entire character of God.

14. And accordingly, when along with His benevolence we admit His justice into our reckoning, the argument for man's immortality is thenceforth placed on a basis of firmer contexture than before. In the first place, let both the happiness and the

misery of human life be viewed in connexion with their causes, and we will not fail to observe that a universal virtue in the world would insure an all but universal happiness, which, in the great amount of it, is marred and prevented only by the wickedness of men—a complex phenomenon this, that receives its likeliest explanation from the complex character of the Godhead, as made up not of perfect benevolence alone, but of perfect benevolence in conjunction with a justice that is also perfect and inflexible. Now, the economy that we should expect from the hands of such a God—we mean His ultimate and everlasting economy, whatever the preparatory steps might be which should lead to its conclusive establishment—were a creation within the precincts of which the union of perfect virtue and perfect blessedness were fully realized by one and all, whether of an unfallen or of a reclaimed family, over whom and in the midst of whom He rejoiced. Now, it is quite obvious of our present life that, though it might be a preparation for the ushering in of such an economy, it is not the economy itself; for here the good and bad, the tares and the wheat, are mixed together into one society; and not to speak of the triumphs of prosperous villany on the one hand, or the sufferings of injured and oppressed innocence on the other, the very presence and juxtaposition of moral evil, the very contiguity of the wicked to the righteous so common within the limits of the same neighbourhood, and often within the bosom of the same family, however useful it might prove *in transitu* to the discipline and the education of those who are in training here for the eternity hereafter, is not likely to endure for ever under the government of a God who, even with a benevolence that is infinite, might still be a God who loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity. There is much therefore, in the state of our present world, when its phenomena are fully read and rightly interpreted, to warrant the expectation, that a time for the final reparation of all those grievous unfitnesses and inequalities is yet coming—when the good and the evil shall be separated into two distinct societies, and the same God who, in virtue of His justice, shall appear to the one in the character of an avenger, shall, in virtue of his love, stand forth to the other as the kind and munificent Father of a duteous offspring, shielded by His parental care from all that can offend or annoy in mansions of unspotted holiness.

15. But for the element of justice, viewed as distinct from benevolence, both in itself and in the character of the Deity, we

should have no stepping-stone by which to arrive at this conclusion; and the utilitarian morality which would merge or confound these two into one, would obscure the evidence for the two great doctrines of our natural theology, while it feels no need, and therefore makes no demand, for any revealed theology to supplement its lessons, and shed the lustre of a higher manifestation upon both.

16. In as far as the intimations of conscience are felt or believed by us to be the intimations of a God, in so far shall we be led to conceive of ourselves as placed under a moral government, and with the usual sanctions too—that is, of rewards for obedience, and of penalties for the transgression of its laws. The rudiments of such a conviction, we feel persuaded, are to be found everywhere; nor will it be found difficult to awaken it into something of a distinct and sensible form. This is often done by a voice from without—as of a missionary when he addresses, perhaps for the first time, the rudest of nature's children, and may in his first lesson make mention of God and of His law. There is nothing in this that is incongruous, but the contrary, either with the notion of that Great Spirit who is recognised and commands the homage of the wandering tribes in America; or of that unseen and eternal power who is imaged forth in the idols of Hindostan. In short, let men be told in any region of the globe, on the one hand, of their Maker and Sovereign, and on the other, of the rightful authority which belongs to Him over the creatures whom he Has made; and there may be nature's disinclination, but it is not nature's darkness anywhere which prevents a ready coalescence with the theme. There is enough of light for the apprehension of what is thus said even in the minds of savages; and if not enough to carry their belief, at least as much as should command their attention to the further lessons of him who has come to tell them of sin and of salvation. He does not outrun their intelligence when he speaks to them of the great and invisible Sovereign who is above, and of the duties which they owe to Him; and however pure and rational may be the theism in which he deals, there is a preparation beforehand in the consciences even of these simple wanderers of the desert, for the word thus brought to them from afar.

17. Such is the natural theism that more or less prevails throughout the world—a certain sense of God and of His law; and, along with this as its unavoidable accompaniment, in all

various degrees of strength and sensibility, a certain sense of guilt. For inseparable from their feeling of a law must be the feeling with all men of their distance and deficiency therefrom. Their own consciousness will tell how short, nay, how contrary they are, from the standard and rule of their own consciences; and by their disobedience to the voice of the monitor within, will they estimate the measure of their disobedience to the counterpart voice of the Divinity above them. It is thus that nature's sense of a God is so generally, we could even say so universally, followed up by nature's fear of an avenger; for she is wholly a stranger to that perverse and artificial sophistry which would sink the justice or authority of the Sovereign in the mere fondness of an indulgent parent; and so the theology of conscience, or which is the same thing, of humanity at large, is in all nations the theology of fear. Nature rejects the paradox, or rather the absurdity of a government without sanctions; and hence, though aggravated and distorted by ignorance or superstition, the religion of terror is not only prevalent throughout the world, but has a foundation in the just apprehensions of the human spirit. It is not confidence in a propitious, but it is the dread of an offended God, which forms the prevalent religious feeling of our species—as is manifest both in the sacrifices and bloody rites of paganism, and in the delusive opiates of Popery, which have been alike devised to quell the misgivings that are felt in the hearts of all men.

18. And this characteristic in the theology of nature is fully responded to in the science and the ethical systems of our best philosophers, insomuch that what forms the dread of the unlettered multitude, and therefore of little account with some who but regard it as a mere popular sensibility, is also confessed to be a great, nay, an insoluble difficulty, in our schools of most enlightened jurisprudence. There is no escaping the conviction that a moral government without sanctions is a nullity; and that if God is to exact, and man at his pleasure with impunity to disobey—then the Sovereign of the universe possesses in heaven but the semblance of a throne. And the urgent question is—how can the breach between God and a guilty world be repaired, or how can a readjustment be effected between a righteous Lawgiver and the transgressors of His law? This is the question of all others on which the destinies of the human race are suspended. It is a question which nature can originate, but which nature cannot resolve—a difficulty in which natural religion has

landed the world, nay, which she herself has demonstrated, but from which she can discover no outlet, and devise no possible way of extrication.

19. We are aware that some of the pious and well-meaning, but withal mistaken friends of Christianity, have looked with distrust and disquietude on the pretensions of natural theology, as if they dreaded every accession made either to her doctrines or her evidences by any of the sciences—lest, in the apprehension of her disciples, it should leave a gospel and a revelation uncalled for. Bishop Butler speaks of Christianity as a supplement to natural religion; and it may readily be thought that the more which natural religion discovers, the less may Christianity have to supplement. But, in truth, it is all the other way. For let us only consider what the doctrines are on which the natural theology of science might possibly cast a greater light than the natural theology of conscience. Does it multiply the proofs for the existence of God?—then it only enhances the obligation under which we lie, of giving most solemn and respectful entertainment to any message that bears upon it the signatures of a likely revelation from Himself. Or does it tell more forcibly and fully of His character?—then surely will it but strengthen His claim of being listened to when He speaketh, and believed in when He makes known His ways and His judgments to the children of men. Or does it look on the Divine economy under which we sit, as having in it the nature of a Divine government, where God is the rightful Sovereign, and we the rightful subjects of His authority. Does it look on the jurisprudence which this relation implies as a reality?—then all we ask is but a philosophic steadfastness and consistency at its hands, that it may look on the question, "How shall God, in the high office of a Lawgiver, deal with men, the undoubted transgressors of His law?" as a reality also, not to be blinked but disposed of. Or, by help of its sounder ethics, does it lead us to regard His truth and justice as no less the distinct and integral characteristics of the Deity, than are His benevolence or His wisdom?—this does not lay the perplexity, but only makes it all the more helpless and embarrassing; for how shall a God with such attributes leave either the sins of our history unreckoned with, or the sanctities of His own nature without a vindication? To make clear the terms of this dilemma is one thing—to solve the dilemma is another. Natural theology achieves but the first. The second is beyond her. She can tell the difficulty, but she cannot resolve

the difficulty. Revelation is called for, not merely as a supplement to the light and the informations of nature; but far more urgently called for as a solvent for nature's perplexities and fears. Natural theology possesses the materials out of which the enigma is framed; but possesses not the light by which to unriddle it. It can state the question which itself it cannot satisfy; but the statement of the question is not the solution of it. Natural theology prompts the inquiry; but it is another and a distinct theology from that of nature which meets the inquiry, and tells man what he shall do to be saved.

20. There is no cause for jealousy. All the illustration which science can shed upon natural religion only serves to make the darkness of man's ulterior prospects more visible than before. It manifests the danger, but casts not one ray of light on the method of deliverance therefrom. With every possible accession which can be made to its discoveries and its doctrines—so far from a revelation being thereby superseded, the genuine and legitimate effect on every rightly exercised spirit is to awaken a more earnest sense of its necessity. Let us imagine of natural theology that all which lies within her province were brightened to the uttermost, and even to the degree of certainty—what, after all, were the great certainty wherewith we had to do, and which should thus be placed in open manifestation before us?—that our guilty species is under the displeasure of an offended God, and on its descending way to an undone eternity. The place and the path of safety, if such there be, as being beyond her province, are alike unknown to her.

21. The question is, How can a God of justice take into acceptance the sinners who have broken His law? Or how, after that His truth and the authority of His government stand committed to the penalties of their disobedience—how can this authority be maintained, and yet these penalties be averted—and without disparagement, too, to the high and holy attributes of a nature which is unchangeable? This is that problem in the high jurisprudence of Heaven which angels might desire to look into, but which even angels might not be able to resolve—and far less can natural theology, limited as it is within the humble range and humbler faculties of men. Natural theology might announce the problem, but cannot resolve it. It might brighten even into clear and capital letters the wording of the question; but it can neither frame the reply, nor furnish the premises on which it shall be founded. There is not, therefore,

an utter extinction of all light; for if so, both the question and its answer had been alike unknown to us. Nature cannot be in total darkness, else it never could have lifted the inquiry—Wherewithal shall men appear before God? But it is in total darkness for the answer or way of meeting this inquiry, and all the light which it has, instead of helping to dissipate the mystery, only serves to deepen it the more.

22. It follows not, because natural theology is the precursor of Christianity, that it is in the same way that a premiss goes before its conclusion. There is no logical dependence of the latter upon the former; and far less could we take our departure from the former, so as to arrive by the footsteps of a logical demonstration at a discovery of the latter. It is not an argumentative priority, as in a process of reasoning, or of synthetic derivation, but only an historical priority in the mind of the inquirer. The natural precedes the Christian theology, just as the cry of distress precedes the relief which is offered to it, or rather, as the sensation of distress precedes the grateful and willing acceptation of the remedy which is suited to it. Man, though in full possession of a natural theology, never could, by any method of deduction, have fancied or framed the system of Christianity out of it. Yet this hinders not that when Christianity is brought to him by external revelation, a most precious and satisfactory evidence, even the evidence of their perfect adaptation, may be struck out between its doctrines on the one hand, and the felt wants or aspirations of nature upon the other. The light which resides in natural theology singly never could have led to the discovery of the gospel; but when natural theology and the gospel are brought together, the conjunct light which thence arises might lead to the discernment of its truth. The complete adjustment which obtains between the parts of the one and counterparts of the other, might bespeak the intelligence of a God, and demonstrate, of Him who is the Author of human nature, that He is the author of Christianity also. It is thus that the law in our hearts might still perform the same office which the law of Moses did in the days of the apostles—when, acting the part of a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ, it shut them up unto the faith of His gospel.*

* Every possible addition to the evidence of natural theology but enhances the difficulty of the question, Wherewith shall a man appear before God? and so enhances our need of a revelation.—Acts xvi. 30; Gal. iii. 23; Ps. lxxxv. 10.

BOOK III.—EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

CERTAIN PREFATORY REASONINGS.

1. There are some who must be satisfied that a revelation is necessary, ere they will proceed to inquire whether it is true. There seems to be no logical propriety in this. It presumes a greater acquaintance with the principles and policy of the Divine administration than actually belongs to us. We may be far more able to estimate the palpable evidences of a fact than to assign the hidden causes in which it originated, and just because we are better qualified to observe than to speculate. A revelation is an historical event; and to ascertain if it have actually and historically taken place, all that may be required is to examine the monuments of its reality which are still before our eyes, or trace the vestiges left behind it upon earth. But ere we can decide upon its necessity, we must know the purposes of God, or be able to tell the reasons of state which influence the proceedings of heaven's high monarchy. It savours more, we think, not of modesty alone, but of philosophic wisdom, to quit the transcendental for the accessible inquiry, or to recall ourselves from the distances and the depths of an unknown territory, that we may become learners, and be acquainted with the certainties at hand.

2. There are two distinct aspects under which this necessity for a revelation might be contemplated. It might be viewed either with a reference to the general state of mankind before and after the introduction of Christianity, or with a reference to the wants and personal feelings of a single inquirer. It is chiefly

in the former of these lights that this theme has been regarded by those who have tried to make it subserve a demonstration on the side of the Christian religion: and so they tell us, as does Dr. Leland in his book on this very subject, of the state of morality in the heathen world. They present us with a contrast between ancient and modern times; they expatiate on the darkness and the idolatry of paganism, and hold out a frightful picture of the atrocities and the vices by which society was distempered ere that the light of the Christian religion shone upon our earth; and on these premises would they base a presumption, if not a strong probability, for that religion being true. Still my preference is for making a short cut, as it were, instantly and at once to the main question, by laying an immediate hand on its direct evidences, so that instead of getting at the truth of the gospel through the medium of its necessity, I should feel as if I were treading on a far more solid pathway, or making a far surer transition by turning about the inference, and stepping onward to the necessity for a gospel through the medium of its truth. We think that ours is a safer ground, whereas that there is a somewhat of the *a priori* spirit in their method of dealing with the question. We confess our inability to surmise, and far less to affirm, what God will do in given circumstances; and would far rather place our confidence in the informations of history, if she have any to offer, on what God has done. We know vastly too little of that mysterious Being who suffered so many ages of darkness and depravity to roll on ere that Christianity arose upon our world, and still leaves the great majority of our race unvisited and unblessed by her illuminations—we confess ourselves too unequal to the explanation of such phenomena as these, for confidently saying that because men needed a revelation, therefore, as a matter of necessary inference, a revelation was in all likelihood, if not in all certainty, to be looked for. For ourselves, we do not feel the strength of this argument, and can therefore have little or no value for it. We would rather limit ourselves to the task of seeking what is or what has been, than speculate on what should be. The *a priori* evidence which would lead us to anticipate, is, in our reckoning, of no estimation when compared with the *a posteriori* evidence which would lead us to infer; and therefore, instead of founding our convictions of the truth of the gospel on the real or the imagined necessities beforehand for such a dispensation, would we look both to the event in itself, and to the events which followed it,

and thus build an argument for the reality of our faith on the basis of its existing memorials and its recorded testimonies.

3. But there is a difference between this historical necessity, if it may be so termed, for a revelation, which reasoners try to make out by a general survey of the state of the world, or its various countries, in times preceding and those which followed the Christian era, and that experimental necessity which is felt by individuals when, labouring under the conviction of guilt, they seek for a place of enlargement and deliverance therefrom. The latter, we say, is far more available than the former in the way of argument for the faith. And the difference is this—that in the one case the inference is grounded on what we think to be the likeliest for God; in the other case, the inference is grounded on what we find to have been the best for ourselves; or, in other words, there is all the difference between a fancy and a finding. The one is an excogitation, the other an experience; and so much better than the former as we know ourselves better than we know God. And let it be observed that experience never speaks more powerfully home than when it is on the question of our life or death, or a matter in which our own personal interests and feelings are vitally concerned. When the conscience-stricken sinner is made to feel that he is in the hands of an angry God—when pursued by the sense alike of guilt and of danger, he casts about for a way of extrication—when after, it may be, a thousand weary and anxious and unavailing efforts his mind is at length put into busy converse with the gospel of Jesus Christ, and for his complicated distress finds a precise counterpart in the complex proposition which is set forth there, a remedy of various parts suited all over to his felt and various exigencies—when he finds that its doctrines on the moment they are embraced give peace to his heart, and that its precepts, when they become his adopted taskwork, serve to purify and exalt his nature; and, above all, that its bidden prayers are followed up in his own experience by the fulfilment of its declared promises—in all this there is the light of a most precious and satisfying manifestation to him who is the subject of it. With him it was the felt necessity of a revelation which conducted to the persuasion of its reality. Its impulse carried him to his Bible; and because of the striking and numerous adaptations in this book to the peculiarities of his own constitution, he recognises an Author who could find His way through all the arcana of his moral nature—a way so alien to the first conception, and so much above

the discovery of man, that verily God must have framed this volume, verily God must be in it of a truth.*

4. But it is altogether worthy of being observed, that though it was a felt necessity which gave the first impulse to this train of reasoning, the mere necessity itself would have proved a most insufficient basis for it. The necessity could never of itself have led us to devise, and far less to discover the truths of that gospel which has only been made known to us by a day-spring from on high. The disease of our nature could not alone have suggested the remedy; and it is only when this felt disease and its proposed remedy are brought into juxtaposition that the light of a satisfying evidence is struck out from the adaptation between them. We must have both the objective and the subjective before us ere we can perceive their fitness to each other, or infer from this observed fitness that a designer had to do with them. Still, the fitness of the Bible, or of the truths which are in it, to the necessities of the human spirit, may as clearly evince the hand of a designer in the construction of this volume, as the fitness of the world, or of the things which are in it, evinces the same hand in the construction of external nature. They are both cases of adaptation, and the one is just as good an argument for a revealed as the other is for a natural theology. The argument is altogether premature if we propose to base it on the necessity alone. But take the remedy along with it, and the reasoning changes its character by changing its place. Instead of a conjectural *a priori*, it now becomes an experimental and an *a posteriori* argument.†

5. But there is another topic which, as affecting the posterior evidence for the truth of revelation, may require to be adjusted before that we enter on the consideration of that evidence. The greatest of our historical proofs in behalf of Christianity is the miraculous power said to have been put forth by its first teachers, as the evidence of their supernatural commission; but it has been contended that such in their very nature is the incredibility of miracles, as to place them beyond the reach of history altogether, inasmuch as it does not lie within the power of this great informer of all that is past to accredit such events as

* Difference between the historical and the personal necessity for a revelation. The historical not overlooked in Scripture.—Rom. i. 21, 22.

† The personal necessity for a revelation not in itself an evidence of that revelation, but the adaptation between its proposed remedy and the felt necessity or disease, a most influential argument.—1 Cor. xiv. 23, 24.

these. Certain it is, that the greater the unlikelihood of any event, the greater is the amount of evidence required to satisfy us of its truth; and that such unlikelihood bears a proportion to the rarity of its occurrence. Now what class of events is more infrequent than miracles? The common language respecting them may be very incorrect, but still it is because of their exceeding rarity that we hear them spoken of as phenomena, not only unsupported, but even as opposed by all experience. May not their improbability then be so great as that no testimony can possibly overcome it? One thing is obvious, that whatever the improbability of a miracle being true, there is no improbability in testimony being false. There is something very uncommon in a miracle, but there is nothing uncommon in a lie; and surely it seems the more rational alternative to believe in that which is common, rather than in that which is uncommon;—so that by this mode of reckoning—and it does look very plausible—when a miraculous story is brought to our ears, rather than admit the miracle as true we should count on the story as not true. This, though briefly expressed, forms the substance of Mr. Hume's famous demonstration, not against the alleged miracles of the gospel only, but against all miracles; and thus he tries to make good the position, that to establish the truth of a miracle is an achievement utterly beyond the power of testimony.

6. I have elsewhere met this argument of Mr. Hume's by an attempted refutation of my own.* What led me to bestow upon it an independent treatment was that I did not feel satisfied with any of the former replies made by his antagonists on the side of Christianity. Of these the fullest and ablest is by Dr. Campbell of Aberdeen, whose book on miracles I recommend to your careful and attentive perusal. He quite succeeds in bringing his adversary into inextricable difficulties, but without, in my opinion, clearing his own way to an unassailable position for the truth which he defends. It is quite possible to silence an opponent by convicting him of sundry and glaring derelictions from his own principle, yet without substituting the true principle in its room, or setting it there on its right and just foundation. And accordingly, the attack first made by Hume has been renewed at various times by his successors in infidelity—more especially by Laplace, in his *Essai sur les Probabilités*, and in the Edinburgh Review of this treatise. This last performance was exceedingly well met shortly after it made its appearance

* See "Select Works," vol. vi. p. 40.

in an able pamphlet by Dr. Somerville, the minister of Drumelzier in Peebles-shire. I still felt, however, that notwithstanding the partial successes by which this one and that other adversary was disarmed, there was still wanting a thorough exposition of the whole argument—which I desiderated all the more, that I had long been impressed with the possibility of putting the matter in such a light as might conclusively settle the question, and place it for ever beyond the reach of controversy. What I have since published on this subject in a preliminary chapter of my book on the Evidences of Christianity, was originally given in four lectures to the students of this class, but which I must now, if possible, condense within the limits of a single address.

7. We, in the first place, then, would discard the peculiar principle adopted by Dr. Campbell respecting the evidence of testimony. We do not think that our belief in testimony is an ultimate law of the human mind, or that it rests on any distinct and separate principle of its own. We conceive that our faith in testimony is just as resolvable into our faith in the constancy of nature, as is our faith in any other of those innumerable cases, where from one term of a formerly observed sequence we infer either that it has been preceded or that it will be followed by some certain other term. An event which we have not seen, and the testimony which brings it to our ears, we regard simply as the terms of a progression, whereof the testimony is a consequent, and the event an antecedent; and of which we conceive that they stand related to each other now in the same way that we have observed them related to each other before. Or, in other words, we infer the truth of the event from its heard testimony, just as we infer the reality of any antecedent from its observed consequent;—in short, we should meet the deistical just as we have already met the atheistical reasoning of Mr. Hume. We think it quite unnecessary to have conjured up a new principle for the refutation of either. We fear that this has not only mystified but weakened the defensive argument—for a God in the one instance, for a revelation in the other. If we must assign two separate and independent sources for these two kinds of evidence—we mean the evidence of testimony and that of experience—then we should not know how to confront them against each other, or how to institute a comparison between them, any more than we should know how to strike a balance between things incommensurate, and therefore incommensurable—so as to say, for example, whether this line or that surface is the

greater of two quantities. Things to be compared with each other in degree, must in kind be homogeneous. And thus, if our faith in testimony is to be held as distinct from our faith in experience, we should be utterly at a loss to decide whether the event of which we have been told, or the opposite event which we should have inferred from the usual way in which antecedents and consequents follow each other, which of these is to be regarded as the more, and of which of them the less credible of the two. There can be no proportionality, at least assignable by us, unless there be a common standard of measurement betwixt them. We should therefore like, if possible, to raise our argument in defence of miracles, even as we did our argument in defence of a God, on an experimental basis. It is for this reason that we were led to accept of Mr. Hume's premises, and with him to view the question as a contest between opposite experiences.

8. But while we dissent from Dr. Campbell respecting the origin of our belief in testimony, this is not essential to the validity of our argument in reply to Mr. Hume. Whether Dr Campbell be right or wrong in his mental theory, the credibility of miracles, on the report of eye-witnesses, is still capable of having the experimental test applied to it; and our position is, that it will survive the application. A refutation on this particular ground was urgently called for; nor do we see how without it those objections could have been adequately met, which were still reiterated, and from the highest quarters, long after the celebrated essay of Dr. Campbell had been given to the world. We do not refuse with him the experimental test of Mr. Hume, and think it enough for the exposure of his sophistry, simply to point out the error which he has made in the application of it.

9. It is quite true that testimony has often deceived me, and it is just as true that I never saw a miracle, of which no stricter definition need at present be given than that it is a deviation from the established course of nature. I, on the one hand, have often observed the falsehood of testimony—I, on the other, never once observed any failure in the constancy of nature. It seems and sounds a most rational conclusion from these premises, that, when told of a miracle, I should reject the evidence which I have so often found to be variable, and keep by the evidence which has never disappointed me. In other words, I should calculate that, as often heretofore, human testimony has been false; and that, as always heretofore, nature abides unfaltering.

10. The error of Mr. Hume lies here. He has failed to re-

solve testimony into its distinct species. He has chosen not to observe that of two kinds of testimony, the one may possess wholly different characteristics, and have been given in wholly different circumstances from the other; and that while the one may often, the other may never once have deceived us. Instead of this, he has lumped together all sorts of testimony under one general and undistinguishing name, and has made each of these, even the purest and most incorruptible, responsible for the errors and falsities of all the rest. This is quite as egregious an injustice as if, in dealing with two men, I should lay upon the one, who was never known to swerve in the least from integrity and truth, the burden of all that discredit which the other had incurred by frauds and falsehoods innumerable. This is precisely the error of Mr. Hume. By his method of reckoning there can be no distributive justice, just because there is no distribution. We readily allow that testimony has often deceived us; but the question proper to the matter on hand is, Has ever such testimony deceived us, possessed of such specific characters, and given in such specific circumstances, that its falsehood were as great a miracle in the moral, as the most stupendous prodigy ever recorded to have taken place in the material world?

11. It is thus that by a single testimony of such a kind as that its falsehood would be as miraculous as the event testified, we might at least countervail the inherent improbability which lies in a miracle. In balancing the two, there might be an equilibrium between the credibility on the one side, and the incredibility on the other. Mr. Hume's sentence of rejection on a miracle might thus be set aside. But more is wanted ere we can pass upon it a sentence of affirmation. It is not enough that it should be brought midway between belief and unbelief; or that the improbability which attaches to a miraculous event, and that too on the ground of its being miraculous, should be merely neutralized. It should be overbalanced, and this is most effectually done by a combination of testimonies.

12. The power of evidence which lies in such a combination is well known to every mathematician acquainted with the doctrine of probabilities. If the credibility of each separate and independent testimony were represented by a number—then the credibility afforded by their concurrence is equal to the product of them all. Let the improbability of a miracle be so great as that of a million to one, but let the credibility of the testimony which vouches for its truth be also a million to one—then the proof is,

at least, a full equivalent for the disproof; and the mind, with this view of a miracle and its accompanying evidence, will be in a state of simple neutrality regarding it. Let there now be superadded another testimony distinct from the former, and of the same high quality, or a million to one—this million will now represent the amount of credit due to the miracle; and should we still imagine another and another, we should soon arrive by a most rapid multiplying process at many million-fold millions by which to estimate the value of the historical proof which might be accumulated in favour of a miraculous story. It is worthy of observation, that if a given number of common testimonies should suffice to uphold our belief in the events of common history—then let there be the same number of proportional and so of first-rate testimonies for the events of a miraculous history; and while one of these neutralizes the improbability of the miracle, we have the high product of the high numbers which represent the others to establish affirmatively its truth—and that by a gigantic superiority over all the evidence which can be alleged for the ordinary and secular narratives of the ages that are past. It is thus that the superlative testimonies of saints and martyrs in the first century of our faith, might not only cancel the whole improbability which attaches to a miracle, but greatly overpass it—and so as positively to accredit the evangelical story, with a weight and a splendour of evidence that exceed, in a degree that is incalculable, all other history. Such is the legitimate outgoing of that argument by which the sophistry of Hume might not only be disposed of, but there be substituted in its place the demonstration of a far higher probability for the miracles of the gospel, than for any other informations which have been handed down to us in the documents of past ages. And this is not the only instance in which the objections of infidelity have been followed up by a similar result—not only met but overmarched; so that on the arena to which they have been called, the defenders of Christianity have done more than repel the assault of adversaries—they have converted what before was held to be a place of vulnerable exposure into a place of strength and security, and raised within its limits additional strongholds and muniments of the faith—wresting from the hand of enemies the weapons of their warfare, and converting them into the engines of their utter defeat and overthrow.

13. Such is a very general outline of the argument that we employ in opposition to Mr. Hume. Its whole peculiarity, and

we may add its whole power, if viewed only as a reply to him, lies in our exposure of the oversight, if not of the artifice, by which he has burdened all testimony in the gross, with the discredit that might be laid on its several species, instead of making each species responsible only for the errors or falsities of its own. And there is a species absolutely free of all falsities and errors—unimpeachable and without a flaw, and of which it were as hard to believe that it could deceive us as to believe in the reality of any miracle. By one such testimony the whole unlikelihood of the miracle is done away; and by two or more the truth of it is established. The essence of our refutation lies in the first of these conclusions. In the second, or the argument grounded on combination, there can be no claim to novelty, familiar as it must have been to all who ever made the evidence of testimony a subject of numerical computation. Still the previous reasoning leads to a prodigious enhancement of the final result —for after having by one testimony of the highest order neutralized all the improbability which Mr. Hume ascribes to a miracle, we can by the remaining testimonies of like quality and power build up an evidence for miracles far surpassing all that we possess for the events of common history. It is well that men of science may, even by dint of their own mathematics, be shut up unto the faith. Mr. Hume asserts for miracles such an insusceptibility of proof from testimony, as must for ever place them the lowest of all events in the scale of credibility; and it is well therefore to present the demonstration, if not that they have been actually proved, at least that they are susceptible of being so proved as to make them the highest in the scale.*

14. The actual evidence for the miracles of the gospel actually told on the convictions of men, long before either this sceptical objection of Mr. Hume, or the argument by which it has been met, was ever heard of. This evidence did its own work directly and immediately on thousands of minds, alike unconscious of the difficulty which this subtle metaphysician placed in its way, or of the explanation by which the difficulty is solved—undisturbed therefore by the one, and having no demand, because without the sense or feeling of any practical necessity for the other. The testimony of the first witnesses for the resurrection of Christ—that most stupendous of all miracles—carried the be-

* Our refutation of Hume's argument respecting testimony, places the argument for miracles on an experimental basis, and so makes it peculiarly fit for being presented to mathematicians and the cultivators of the exact sciences.—John x. 25, 37; xv. 24.

lief of thousands; and this belief descended from age to age, just as all other historical faith is transmitted downward by written narratives bearing in themselves a credible aspect, and supported by an adequate consent on the part both of contemporaneous and successive authors. It was not till after the lapse of more than seventeen hundred years from the event in question, that the idea was started of an essential shortness and powerlessness in human testimony, to establish the truth of any miracle. We might well imagine that after this idea had been presented to the mind of an inquirer, and before the satisfactory refutation of it had been devised and made known to him, he might have felt it irrational to repose faith in any miracles supported by any amount of human testimony; but that now, when both the idea and its refutation have been placed before him, it was perfectly right and rational to believe in them. But though we might thus characterize the belief of him who has made himself master both of the infidel sophistry and of its exposure—how shall we characterize the belief of those who throughout all the intermediate generations, from the days of the apostles to the middle of the last century, were alike ignorant of both? We might pronounce the faith of him to be rational who has cleared his way through the logical perplexity which Hume contrived to throw around the subject. But shall we say of those Christians who lived before that perplexity was stirred, or who have lived since, but never heard of it—that their faith is alike rational? It is by a certain intellectual process that, when presented with the miracles of the gospel and those testimonies which form their credentials, they are conducted to a belief in their reality. Now the question is, was this process a sound one; or would you say that because we who are cognizant, first, of Mr. Hume's puzzle, and secondly, of its solution, that because ours may therefore be a warrantable and legitimate conviction, so must theirs, although they were alike unconscious of both?

15. Certain it is, that whether their conviction was sound or not, it was abundantly strong; and it is indeed upon the strength and universality of such a conviction, in certain given circumstances, that Dr. Paley founds the only reply which he attempts making to Mr. Hume's argument. He supposes twelve men to agree in their account of a miracle, and that the testimony of each is accredited by all the circumstances which can make us feel that its falsehood were impossible; that each perseveres in the same statement in the face of threats and tortures, and finally

of death ; and that thus there is not only a single first-rate proof, on which by itself we should place as much reliance as we would on the constancy of nature, but a combination of these. Dr. Paley enters into no calculation, first, on the power of but one such testimony to neutralize, and then on the power of them all put together, infinitely to overpass the alleged improbability of a miracle. Instead of telling us why all men should believe a miracle thus attested, he is satisfied with the fact that all men would believe it—"I undertake to say that there exists not a sceptic in the world who would not believe them, or who would defend such incredulity."*

16. Now this, though a safe, is but an empirical, and not a scientific demonstration. His conclusion is a right one, because what all men believe, not in virtue of those local or accidental influences which are variable, but in obedience to those original tendencies of the mind which are implanted there by the hand of God, and are therefore universal as humanity itself,—what all men thus believe is true, because God himself is true, and never would deceive His rational offspring by giving them an intellectual constitution, the incipient or first principles of which are at variance with the objective realities of the world in which they are placed, or the system of external nature by which they are surrounded. Now, the confident anticipation of a like result in like circumstances, or what is but the converse of this, the as confident inference of the same antecedents for the same consequents, is precisely one of these instincts, and which meets with a glorious verification in the actual constancy of nature, or in what has been termed the invariableness of her sequences giving

* "But the short consideration which, independently of every other, convinces me that there is no solid foundation in Mr. Hume's conclusion, is the following:—When a theorem is proposed to a mathematician, the first thing he does with it is to try it upon a simple case, and if it produce a false result, he is sure that there must be some mistake in the demonstration. Now, to proceed in this way with what may be called Mr. Hume's theorem: If twelve men, whose probity and good sense I had long known, should seriously and circumstantially relate to me an account of a miracle wrought before their eyes, and in which it was impossible that they should be deceived; if the governor of the country, hearing a rumour of this account, should call these men into his presence, and offer them a short proposal, either to confess the imposture, or submit to be tied up to a gibbet; if they should refuse with one voice to acknowledge that there existed any falsehood or imposture in the case; if this threat were communicated to them separately, yet with no different effect; if it was at last executed; if I myself saw them, one after another, consenting to be racked, burnt, or strangled, rather than give up the truth of their account;—still, if Mr. Hume's rule be my guide, I am not to believe them. Now I undertake to say, that there exists not a sceptic in the world who would not believe them, or who would defend such incredulity."

rise to those uniform progressions in the order of cause and effect, the traversal of which, by a special intromission of the Divine will, is held to be a miracle.* Now, the fact, the ascertained fact, that a certain number of testimonies, possessing certain obvious characteristics, and delivered in certain given circumstances, would constrain every man, even the most obstinate sceptic, to believe in the truth of a miracle, forms a safe and satisfactory ground on which to conclude that such a belief is in harmony with the first principles of the human understanding, and therefore also in harmony with those objective truths to which our subjective nature has been adapted by Him who is alike the Artificer of the mental and material economy of the universe. This is one way by which to arrive at the proposition, that a miracle so attested as that all men must believe it, must in itself be true, by an appeal to the phenomena of belief, instead of an appeal to the principles of belief. It is deciding the matter by an experiment on human nature, and very much of the same sort as when we try the truth of a geometrical theorem by the construction of such a figure as it supposes, and then the measurement of those parts whereof it announces the position or the magnitude. We might thus, on the mere finding of a pair of compasses, disprove the theorem, and so dismiss it from all farther notice; and it is exactly thus that Dr. Paley disposes of the sophistry of Mr. Hume. Nevertheless, as it is better to prove or disprove in mathematics by reasoning than by the application of the scale and compasses—so were it better if the general demonstration of Hume could be met, if possible, on his own premises, and at all events by a counter-demonstration in terms of equal generality.

17. Now, the way of doing this is to describe in language the mental process which that inquirer performs in reality, who, on being presented with the report of a miracle, and looking to its testimonies, is conducted to the belief of its truth. On looking to the miracle alone, he is visited, and rightly so, with a sense of its improbability—of such improbability, at least, as will require more than ordinary evidence to surmount it. Then, on looking to the testimony he never thinks of judging it upon any other merits than its own; nor does it detract by ever so little from its credit, that a testimony of altogether different charac-

* Even a miracle is no infringement of the order of cause and effect, for this special intromission of the Divine will is the introduction of a new cause, making the causal antecedent different from what it was before.

teristics has often turned out to be false. It is thus that practically and most soundly he keeps clear of the sophism of Hume. He considers whether such testimony as he is now attending to ever turned out to be false; and if he conceives not, then one such testimony might suffice to countervail all the improbability which he felt to be in the miracle at the outset of his investigation. When he has reached this point, he will lie open to the impression of a most rapidly augmenting and accumulating evidence which tells affirmatively on the side of the miracle, should another and another testimony, of like high quality with the first, be presented in its favour; for he without calculation feels, and most justly, what the mathematician only can set before us in figures, the weight of evidence which lies in the combination of testimonies. And thus it is that, by dint of sheer common sense, he comes, and most legitimately comes, to the right conclusion, which yet he cannot vindicate, but which the logician and the analyst alone can do on the principles of their respective sciences. It is not for him, but for them to dispose of such sophisms as those of Mr. Hume; but while they are thus engaged, he all unconscious either of their argument or of the necessity which called for it, by simply yielding a just obedience to the instinctive tendencies of his own understanding, lands in such an apprehension of the truth as is in surprising coincidence with, and so is amply verified by, the computations of scientific men. He himself is wholly incapable of these computations, nor is it necessary for his own guidance that he should be capable—the guidance of a rightly constituted intellectual nature, by which he, and thousands more in all ages, have been conducted in the strength of an adequate testimony to a faith in miracles—all of them getting soundly and well through the direct business of the understanding; let others whose office it is to take cognizance of its processes, and to describe them, either continue to misunderstand each other, or to settle their controversies as they may.

18. On this subject let me quote the following most important and just testimony of Laplace, taken from his Essay on Probabilities—"We see from this essay that the theory of probabilities is nothing at bottom but common sense reduced to calculation. It makes us appreciate with exactness what just spirits perceive by a sort of instinct, without being able often to render an account of it." In other words, this direct mental process, we mean the process of common sense, by which com-

mon men are rightly led, and to a safe and sound conclusion—it is for them to execute, but for others to give an account of. This account might be given well or ill; for it is truly a possible thing, that what has been rightly executed by the one party, might be very erroneously stated or represented by the other party—just as a thing might be well done, yet ill described. Just spirits will often perceive, and rightly, by a sort of instinct, while others might fail in giving the right account of their perception. It is thus that peasants may be in the right while philosophers are in the wrong—the one right in the direct business of the understanding, the others wrong in the account which they give of that business. There is a most important difference here between the direct and the reflex, and which runs throughout the whole of mental philosophy. It is exemplified in the mental processes of childhood, which lead by a right pathway to a valid result—yet to trace and describe that pathway were the most difficult of all achievements—so that what an infant does easily and well, might require for the adequate description of it all the nomenclature and analysis of the most profound philosophy. And thus too, by nature's education of the senses, the most unlettered clown might judge as accurately of magnitudes and distances by the eye, as the most accomplished *savant*—though no reflex cognizance was taken of the judging process till the days of Bishop Berkeley, who has so beautifully and convincingly expounded it in his theory of vision. And in like manner, all men were capable of estimating aright the evidence of testimony for a miracle, and when sufficient, of soundly believing it—long before Hume tried to disturb the conclusion by a wrong, to be at length displaced by a right theory of mental vision. The common sense of men did its own work, and rightly too, for ages, long before its decisions were ratified by the calculations of philosophers. It did so by the evidence for miracles; and this might prepare us for admitting the capabilities of the popular mind for other and various evidence, whether explored or not by scientific men, or yet made the subject of their thorough and philosophic investigation. The direct processes of the mind take precedency of the reflex, just as the instances of good reasoning took precedency of its rules—the rules, in fact, deriving all their authority and illustration from the instances; and thus men reasoned rightly and well, long before the science of logic arose; and in the exercise of its supervision on the subject of evidence, reviewed its varie-

ties and assigned its laws. There is no reason to think that the supervision is yet completed; or that all those workings of the human spirit, or all the possible objects of human thought by which it finds its way to sound and legitimate convictions, have yet passed under the review of those whose professional theme is the philosophy of evidence, or the philosophy of the human understanding. Meanwhile, these workings are in busy operation, and on all various fields of inquiry, so that we need not wonder, if on the subject of Christianity there may, in the yet unsounded depths of human intelligence and human consciousness, be mental processes in motion, which lead men, and that most warrantably, to a belief in its truth—though no expounder of the Christian evidences may yet have noticed the processes, or at least have either fully traced or distinctly explained them to the world. It is thus that the truth as it is in Jesus may be doing its work, and make most satisfying demonstration of itself to the minds of thousands—though on grounds which have never yet been stated by defenders of the gospel, perhaps never yet adverted to either by the friends or enemies of the faith.*

CHAPTER II.

ON THE GENERAL EVIDENCE OF HISTORY.

1. It is palpable of certain historical events, many of them conceived to be of great antiquity, that they have obtained a place in the current belief of the world, their right to which no one thinks of questioning. They have, somehow or other, come into undisturbed possession of the general faith of mankind. The destruction of Jerusalem, the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar, the conquests of Alexander the Great, the establishment of the Norman dynasty in England, the discovery of America by Columbus, the Reformation by Luther, the martyrdom of Charles I. and Louis XVI.—these we have selected and singled out at random, among the many thousand events which have

* The direct are anterior to the reflex processes of the understanding; and mankind at large may rightly accomplish the former, whether philosophers have or have not rightly accomplished the latter; and so the capabilities of the popular mind for the apprehension of truth may far outrun the capacities of men of science for an adequate exposition of it. As an illustration of the multiple evidence which lies in the concurrent testimony of two senses, see John xx. 27-29.

taken place in various ages, and in all various places of the globe; and which have acquired a firm settlement as undoubted historical truths in the minds of all men. They are the objects of a universal acquiescence; and for aught which appears they have kept their ground as such, from the time in which they are said to have happened to the present hour.

2. There must be some assignable causes for this implicit and unexcepted confidence, and it promises to facilitate our inquiry into the nature and efficacy of these, that, in contrast with such events as those which have been now enumerated, there are others which are alleged to have taken place, but which are either repudiated as absolutely false, or suspected as at best but doubtful and uncertain. Such are the prodigies of Livy, and the legends of Monkery in the Middle Ages; and various specific impostures, which if they do not crowd upon our recollection so fast as the events of an opposite description, it is because that, after all, the truths of history so greatly outnumber its falsehoods—just as in conversation, notwithstanding all the deceit which abounds in the world, there are more than a hundred truths told for every lie. There is enough, however, both of truth and falsehood in the world to present us with the characteristics of each, and the contrast between them must give us all the greater advantage, when investigating the causes of the different reception which they have met with, and may thus enable us to ascertain when it is that a history should be rejected as spurious, and what, on the other hand, are the marks or signatures of that history which all men regard as authentic and unquestionable.

3. It will help us to a more distinct view of the historical evidence if, considering it as partly internal and partly external, we bestow a separate attention on each of these, as being the two great divisions of the whole subject.

4. The internal historical evidence for any written document which has been handed down to us from past ages, lies in those marks of credibility which are to be found within the limits of the document itself. That there is a real credibility of this sort will be obvious, if we attend to what that is which inspires our confidence in the testimony even of one living witness, and when none of his fellows have yet stood forth to vouch for or to confirm it. There are such things as a credible aspect, a certain tone and bearing of honesty, the natural signs of truth, which may no doubt be counterfeited. but which still prove that truth

as well as falsehood wears a characteristic appearance of its own. All these are so many tokens of veracity which might be so accumulated on the person and manner of even a single witness, as strongly to prepossess us in his favour. They form what may be called the likelihoods of truth, which, according as presented to us in less or in greater degree, might be termed presumptions, probabilities, nay, even proofs by which to warrant our reliance on the testimony of one individual though hitherto a stranger to us; and this anterior to all examination of others, or while yet we had to do with but him alone. This reliance on the informations of a single witness is a thing constantly proceeded on in the matters of daily and familiar converse between man and man; and what is of such perpetual influence and operation in the business of life, should be of avail in the business of scholarship also. For what is true of oral is also true of written testimony, which though dead yet speaketh. A book may announce its own honesty, and wear the visible appearance of it as well as a man. It may engage, and that most legitimately, the confidence of its reader, and that just from the moral characteristics which are obviously graven upon its pages; such characteristics, we mean, as are capable of being transferred from spoken to written language. It is true that we have not the living countenance or impressive accents of the living voice to indicate the sincerity which is within; but we have other indices fully as difficult for an author to counterfeit as these, and which may be so multiplied and sustained throughout as to speak powerfully on his behalf, and to make all men feel the trustworthiness of the narrative which he has placed before them. Though we have neither the tone nor the physiognomy of sentiment, we may have the natural, the unequivocal expression of pure, and honourable, and virtuous sentiment notwithstanding; and besides all this, there may be such an air of truth and directness and perfect simplicity throughout the whole composition—such entire freedom from even the semblance of art or affectation—such marks and manifestations of downright honesty, as make it quite transparent to every man that there is the utmost singleness of mind and purpose in the writer; and so as that the writing which has issued from his hands, to make use of a familiar phrase, speaks for itself, or carries its own recommendation stamped and authenticated upon its forehead. It is thus that even but one historian, apart from the corroborative testimony of all his fellows, might, on the strength of those

credentials alone, which stand forth in his own pages, carry the assent and confidence of his readers along with him. When once they are persuaded of his good faith by these various symptoms of it, nothing more is wanting than that they shall be as well satisfied of his freedom from error as of his freedom from deceit or artifice; and so let such a one but tell what he says he himself saw, let him but announce that he was the eye-witness of his own story; and though in his own single person a solitary voice, yet will he speak as one having authority.

5. And there is one test of credibility still more definite than any we have now specified, by which the veracity even of a single witness might be determined—and that is, consistency with himself. Certain it is, that the contradiction of one part to another might suffice to vitiate and set aside his testimony; and it is precisely thus that a witness on a trial can often, by a skilful cross-examination, be made to break down. On the other hand, by a thorough and sustained agreement with himself, he may not only stand altogether free of this exception, but gain by it a strong affirmative credit for the evidence which he delivers. A lawyer knows this well; and what holds true in the examination of a man, holds as true in the examination of a document, which may either be so convicted of discrepancy between its various assertions, as to bear on the face of it its own condemnation, or so stand its ground against the closest and most searching inquisition of all its statements, whether direct or incidental, as by its manifested harmony reaching even to its faintest allusions and minutest clauses, to give an impression of the perfect integrity wherewith it had been framed. The proof of this is greatly enhanced by the particularity of the narrative, or by the number of circumstances in which it deals—each of these presenting a fresh opportunity, either for the exposure of its falsehood, or failing this, for the confirmation of its truth. It is obvious that in proportion as these are multiplied, the task of harmonizing and arranging them into a feasible story; or, in other words, the task of fabrication and imposture becomes all the more difficult. Hence, for a narrative to be circumstantial, is always regarded as a good presumption in favour of its truth; and more especially if, in the introduction of the circumstances, there is nothing fetched, or strained, or unnatural; but, on the contrary, there appears to be an entire absence of all art on the part of the writer, or of any other effort than that of clearly and fully conveying the facts which are related by him, just as he himself

either saw or understands them. This, then, is one of the strongest of our internal historical evidences.

6. But if truth can be thus elicited by the cross-questioning of one witness, it greatly adds to our materials and our data for such an examination when we institute the same process on several witnesses—comparing or confronting their testimonies with each other. There may lie a great strength of evidence in the coincidences which obtain between different writings of the same author, and still more between different writers—particularly when, to fix and ascertain these, we have to track a way through manifold indirect and incidental allusions; or to bring passages together which, when seen at one view, both give and reflect a deal of mutual light and confirmation; or to evolve a number of hidden harmonies which, so far from lying patent on the surface of the records, escaped altogether the observation of the world, till some skilful hand, that knew how to probe and scrutinize them, brought them up to the light of day, and so made it manifest, that as they could not have been devised for the purposes of imposition, they can be accounted for in no other way than that the writers in question agreed so well because they held converse with realities; and that their consistency, instead of a factitious product, the result of artifice or conspiracy among themselves, was based on the common groundwork of that truth and nature from which all of them drew. No impostor, if he meant to deceive by the semblance of consistency, either with himself or others, would have buried that semblance so far under the face of his composition, that ere it became visible it had to be laboriously extracted from the secrecy of those depths in which it lay for ages. It is like the summoning of evidence from the grave, as if by the resurrection of so many witnesses for the truth; and to this process, alike wonderful in its execution and in its results, do we owe some of the proudest and most conclusive of our historical demonstrations.

7. One is at a loss how to designate this last species of proof, or say to which of the two departments it should be referred—whether to the internal or the external historical evidence. The consistency of an author with himself is a matter purely and strictly internal, as lying wholly within the limits of his book. To mark his consistency with others, we must compare that which is within and that which is without the four corners of the work in question. We shall be disposed to call it internal,

when, having the previous knowledge of other authors, we first notice the harmony on which the evidence is founded in the act of reading the author who is under trial; and we shall be disposed to call it external, if, with our previous knowledge of him, the harmony be perceived by us for the first time in the act of holding converse with other authors. At all events, the evidence is not the less valuable, though we should fail to classify it aright. Its own inherent worth remains the same, whether we place it in the right or the wrong category; and should we have placed it wrong, it is not the only instance in which it has been found difficult, when attempting a right distribution of the objects of human thought, to force truth and nature into a conformity with our artificial divisions.*

8. When one author names another, or when he quotes him, and especially as one having authority, this is clearly and unambiguously an external evidence. Even if, without naming him, he should only depone to the same events with his predecessor—this too would be deemed an external evidence. True, it is an evidence grounded on the coincidence between other books and the book in question. But it is a coincidence which lies broadly and patently on the face of the record; and we should never think of calling the evidence that is grounded on it internal, unless the coincidence was of that less obvious kind which could not be evolved without a minute and critical examination of the structure and inner contents of the volume that was the subject of inquisition. The evidence obtained in this last way is certainly of a very striking and impressive description; but it is the external evidence, as we have now limited and defined it, which is commonly regarded as forming the main strength of the historical argument.

9. Perhaps the best way to give some notion of what has been termed the "process of historical proof," is to consider first how it is that we make sure of the age in which an author writes. It is common, since the introduction of printing, to mark the year of publication on the title-page; and it may secure our confidence in other notes of time just to think how seldom if

* The external and internal historical evidences have a certain middle or debatable ground which lies between them, partaking of the character of both. As the Bible is not one book but a collection of books, each may have an internal evidence springing up within itself, and an external evidence arising from comparison with the others. For the mighty power which lies in the references and quotations from one book to another, see Exod. xvii. 14; Deut. xvii. 18; xxvii. 3; Josh. i. 8; 2 Kings xxii. 13; 2 Chron xxx. 5; xxxiv. 21; xxxv. 25; Neh. viii. 15; xiii. 1; Jer. xxvi. 18; Micah i. 1.

ever it is that we are deceived by such an indication. We might with all safety affirm that not once in a thousand times are we imposed upon in this way by a false date. The vast majority of men have other objects than that of practising such a deceit upon posterity; and in the execution of the vast majority of works there is no conceivable inducement to what in their case would be an act of mere wantonness. We therefore, in almost every instance, place our implicit reliance on such information when thus given respecting the age of any book—even though on but the single testimony of the date at the bottom of its title-page. We are not aware if the antiquity of the first manuscripts or autographs was often marked in a similar manner; but there are other indices of time in the body, if not at the outset of these compositions, which serve the same purpose, and which we have the very same reason for thinking have been placed there in perfect simplicity and good faith. In many cases, indeed, the indication amounts not merely to a proof but to a certainty, as when one ancient author refers to another; and we cannot escape from the conclusion as to which of them is the more ancient of the two. It is thus, too, that we may have the certainty of one author having written after a particular event, and if not the certainty, often the high probability of another author having written before it—as if he should so speak as if Jerusalem were still standing; or if, professing to write of the affairs of the Eastern empire in his own time, there should be no allusion to the progress of the Turkish arms, or the capture of Constantinople. Add to this the many numerical intimations in which history abounds of the length both of lives and of the periods between one event and another, and then reflect how much the probability of one testimony respecting these is enhanced by the accession and concurrence of other and independent testimonies to the same effect, and we shall be at no loss to understand how, out of such materials, a most consistent and stable system of chronology might be formed; so that we are enabled to climb upwardly and with all confidence along the pathway of time from one stepping-stone to another, and have the benefit at each of those reflex and accumulated lights which open up to us the history of past ages. This evidence is so abundant that we can not only assign the credit which is due to historians whose works have long been familiar to us, but we can even test the fidelity of such documents as had been unnoticed for centuries, and which antiquarians for the first time are laying their hands upon.

Over and above the internal characters of truth, of which we have already spoken, there is what may be called a truth of consistency with other narratives, and with all that is previously known, which might serve to authenticate even the new informations of some old yet recently discovered work, and establish its rank among the trustworthy vouchers for the history of periods that have long gone by.

10. We are now in a fit condition for estimating the rightful claims of any ancient author to the confidence of posterity, or of his readers in the present day. It would form no weak guarantee for the validity of his claims, if simply now a universal and unquestioning confidence be reposed in him. It were difficult to imagine how such a feeling should have arisen capriciously in the world; and certainly the most natural, very generally the true solution is, that he has been the object of such a confidence from the first; and that this has been transmitted downward in unchecked and uncontrolled tradition, as by the testimony of one generation to another, to the times in which we live. This is an evidence within the reach of present observation; and there is another of the same kind which serves greatly to strengthen and confirm it—we mean the evidence which lies in the number of distinct manuscripts—all copies of the same work, palpably of various ages and in distant parts of the world. These announce to us, and by memorials which our hands can handle and our eyes can look upon, the value felt in bygone ages for the work in question, anterior to the invention of printing; and often reaching, as may be known from certain palpable characters of far higher antiquity, a great way beyond this. When we consider by how laborious and costly a process of transcription the copies of a book were multiplied in these days, we may be very sure that if a number of such duplicates be yet extant, and that too in many various and distant countries of the world, it implies both a high value and wide-spread demand for the work in question. It tells us that the general confidence which is felt now was also felt in the days of our remote forefathers. The two phenomena are in perfect keeping with each other, both within the ken of our immediate perception, and yet helping to authenticate the compositions and narratives of long-past ages.

11. But the most distinct and definite of all evidence in favour of an author is, when he is referred to or clearly quoted or expressly named by other authors, and in such a way as not only

to bespeak their own confidence in his informations, but so also as to indicate the confidence which his readers have in him—seeing that he may be appealed to for the very purpose of strengthening the argument or giving credibility to the statements which are in the act of being addressed to them. It is thus that each well-known author of antiquity is followed up by a train as it were of documentary evidence in his favour—made up of the testimonies of subsequent authors, who, by the very notice they take of him, demonstrate that they are his successors, or that he is of higher seniority than themselves. And it should be recollected, too, that each of these has his own place in the line of history, and distinct and independent vouchers for his own antiquity, and a retinue of successors who uphold his train ; and by their testimonies in turn, demonstrate his standing and authority in the world of letters. Such a number of writers, either successive so as to compose a train or tissue of evidence, or contemporaneous and striking their lights across to each other, make up altogether a luminous pathway, along which there are manifold data to be found both for ascertaining the facts of history, and for fixing the degree of credit which is due to them. It may be difficult so to describe the various tests and indications of historical truth that they shall be palpable to those who are not in contact with the materials of this contemplation. Nevertheless they are such that the men who actually engage in the study of them, the scholars who traverse this region feel themselves in a world of realities—holding familiar converse with the living men and their doings both of other countries and other ages. There they can discriminate from the fictitious personages of romance almost as confidently as we, among the things which are immediately around us, can discriminate between the objects of our substantive perception, and the forms or phantasies of mere imagination. It is thus that the scepticism of Mr. Hume as to things past could no more strip him of his historical faith—once that he laid his hands and brought his judgment to bear on the documents of history—than his scepticism in things present could lead him practically to abjure that faith which he and all men have ever had in the evidence of the senses. One might almost as well lapse into universal Pyrrhonism, and so renounce his confidence in all truth, as regard all history in the light of a laborious deception, practised for the entertainment of a few as an experiment on the credulity of future ages. In spite of this monstrous imagination, history abounds in the marks and cha-

racters of its own authenticity—and so that by the consent of all men, it is recognised as on the whole a faithful expounder of the scenes and occurrences of the times that are past.

12. We have just stated that one most decisive mark of an author's character for veracity, is to be gathered from the respectful appeals which are made to him and to his works by other authors, whether subsequent or contemporaneous—such as we meet with along the line of successive writers to the compositions of Herodotus and Cicero and Julius Cæsar. Another mark, distinct from this, yet commonly regarded as an external evidence too, is when one author, even without naming or taking any notice whether express or implied of another, deals in the same statements and concurs with him in his narrative, more or less particular, of the same things. If the testimonies be distinct and independent of each other, then there lies the same sort of multiple evidence in their agreement that there is in the consent and harmony of separate depositions made by witnesses in a court of justice, and between whom we are satisfied there was no previous collusion, but that each speaks on his own original and peculiar sources of information. And though it would lessen it should not annihilate the value of a second testimony though it were derived from the first, and had no other foundation than it to rest upon—implying as it would that the later writer had confidence in the one who went before him, and who not only must have been relied upon by those who reiterate his statements, but may also have had a certain hold on the current faith of their readers, seeing that there is no appearance, but perhaps the contrary, of their having been revolted by these statements as things at all incredible or untrue, or till then unheard of. It strengthens one's reliance on the principles of historical evidence, when they are found to meet together in the same author, insomuch that he who is most upholden by the outward testimonies of his fellows, is also the most palpably characterized by those internal marks of truth and nature and honesty which abound in his own pages. It is this conjunction of evidences which secures such a universal and unquestioning acceptance for the works of Cicero and Cæsar, and leaves no doubt in the mind of the reader, that the orations ascribed to the one were his own real pleadings, and the events recorded in the name of the other were his own real transactions. In all these ways a body of historical information has descended from ancient to modern times; and things done in remote ages have obtained a stable, and

we will add, a rightful possession of the general belief of mankind.*

13. There are other considerations on the subject of the historical evidence so obviously true, that they do not require any previous or formal introduction to the notice of the reader. Of these the most important, and highly available for the service of the Christian argument, is, that all other circumstances being equal, that author is most entitled to our credit who lives the nearest, whether in time or place, to the events which are related by him.

14. But besides this evidence of recorded or written testimonies, there is another evidence which, though looked upon as being of an auxiliary or subordinate character, is nevertheless of a very impressive description, and eminently fitted to sustain our general faith in history against the influences of that morbid scepticism which would darken and unsettle all our conceptions of it. It has been sometimes termed the monumental evidence in contradistinction to the documentary, the evidence which lies in those direct narratives that have come down to us of the events which took place in past ages. For besides these events having given rise to those written relations by which they are made distinctly and particularly known, they may have left certain vestiges behind them, which might serve as the indices or memorials of their reality even to the present hour; or at least be so far implicated with the transactions of which we read in ancient authors, as, if not fully to authenticate, yet pleasingly and so far influentially to harmonize with the truth of their story. It is satisfactory when we can say, that we know of nothing before us or around us, which is in dissonance with the histories of other times; and still more, when we can trace a positive agreement between things present, and the events or occurrences of distant centuries—an agreement which one might conceive to be so minute and so manifold, as to make the ocular lend a certain confirmation to the historical, or the evidence of the senses at this moment to coincide with the evidence of testimony given many generations before our day.

15. And first, geography, though not in all respects a monu-

* A much closer and better sustained chain of historical evidence for the facts of the Old and New Testaments, and for the integrity of these records, than for any other documents of ancient times. As specimens of the frequency of historical allusions in Scripture, take the following texts—1 Sam. vi. 6; Judg. xi. 13-27; John iii. 14; Heb. xi.; Ps. lxxviii. 2-5; Josh. iv. 6, 21, 22.

ment reared by human hands, may be well regarded as a monumental evidence to the truth of history—bearing its real, though inarticulate testimony, to the narratives of former ages, many of which could not possibly have been conducted but by a continuous reference—as in describing the movements of war—not to towns and nations only, but to the objects of greatest stability and endurance on the face of our globe. For example, the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar, as narrated by himself, is made all the more credible by his telling us of the white cliffs of Dover, and the tides which, as phenomena they had never seen before, so perplexed and astonished his soldiers—realities to which the shores of England, as seen from France, and the waters both of the North Sea and Mediterranean, still bear witness. The same evidence will be found to accompany both his progress, and that of subsequent commanders, through our island—as when they march through Cantium, the Kent of our present day, or cross the Tamesis, our modern Thames, or take up their position at Londinum, on the bank of that river, the embryo of London, or expatiate in manifold directions, and fight or quarter in various localities over the land, from Cornwall, the same mining district which it now is, till arrested in their attempts to force the passes of the Grampians, which, at the end of two thousand years, still bear on their lofty foreheads the same aspect of defiance to the footsteps of the invader. It is thus that the geography sustains the narrative, and is, as it were, one of the buttresses of history. The coincidence between the one and the other might be so close and multiform, as if not altogether beyond the reach of imposture, at least makes it difficult to imagine what could induce the author of a work of fiction to undergo that laborious study which might enable him to sustain the same accuracy which a traveller does, but without effort—simply by describing the journeys which he actually made, and the localities through which he moved, or the actual scenes which passed before his eyes. The geography interwoven with these various narratives is in such good keeping with the geography of the earth, as it now stands, that we cannot help feeling as if the hand of a describer, and not of an inventor, was employed in the construction of them—so that without our knowledge of hills, and rivers, and towns, and seas, and islands, with their positions and distances, or, in short, with our knowledge of geography, on the whole accurately reflected from the pages of ancient history, we cannot help regarding the one as in some

sort a voucher for the other; and hence a certain impression of reality which it were difficult to resist, as we read of the Roman invasions of Gaul; or, more ancient, of the circuitous route of Hannibal when he effected his passage of the Alps; or of the wars in Spain, and Sicily, and Carthage; or of the internal conflicts in Greece, with its Peloponnesus, and its Achaia, and its Archipelago, set before us in such characters and relations to each other as might be verified by every traveller; or of its invasion by Xerxes; or of the rapid conquests of Alexander—where the places described and the things done in them, the localities and the transactions, throw such light and confirmation on each other, as so far serves, at least in their great and general lineaments, to accredit both, and makes it absolutely impossible for us to believe that all history is a lie.

16. Language, the vehicle of history, is itself a monument, not in what it says, for this is expressly or articulately historical; but in the fact that such should still be the countries where such languages are spoken, we may often discern the vestiges of those great national movements whereof we have a separate and anterior evidence in the records of other days—such as the deep infusion of Latin in the languages of Italy, and Spain, and France, and England—all bearing witness to the conquests and settlements of the ancient Romans.

Such, too, is the continued subsistence of the modern Greek, still adhering, and with wonderful entireness, to the very region over which the triumphs of its eloquence and works of enduring literature have shed an imperishable glory. There is the same monumental character in the surviving names of a multitude of places which could be specified, being identical with those given to the same places in works of high antiquity—as Rome, and Egypt, and Greece, and Athens, and Italy, and Hispania, or Spain, and Britain, and Sicily, and Ætna, and Vesuvius, and thousands more, whether of towns, or countries, or rivers, or mountains—an identity this which is fitted to beget, or helps to strengthen our confidence, both in the history which tells, and the tradition which transmits them from generation to generation. The very derivation of these names serves to authenticate the persons, or the transactions in which they originated—as the Alexandria of Egypt, and the Cæsarea of Palestine; and the numerous towns of England which bespeak them to have been the sites of old Roman encampments, when the country was in a state of military occupation—as Chester, and Woodchester,

and Dorchester, and Doncaster, and Muncaster, and Cirencester, and Excester, now Exeter, the camp on the river Ex, and upwards of fifty more, which tell not of details, to be sure, but tell most decisively of a time when the Romans had their fortifications and place of security all over England, and so, at least, of a real and sufficient groundwork for all such details as the pen of the historian has recorded.

17. But the strictly and properly monumental is a work of human hands, reared, perhaps, many centuries ago, and which may still be looked upon by human eyes—whether as subsisting in a state of entireness, or as presenting only the ruins and the vestiges of what it once was—nay, only as the mounds of Babylon, pointing out the site of mighty towns and edifices which have now been swept away. There is a deal of history embodied in the temples, and camps, and roads, and aqueducts of the Romans, and some degree of evidence cast upon it by the coincidence between the description of these then, and our observation of them now. And there is something still more confirmatory of our historic faith in what might be termed commemorative architecture, and more especially if sculpture be superadded—for which we might adduce the pillar of Trajan as an example of the first, and yet more impressive, the arch of Titus, as an example of the second, where there is represented in stone the identical procession which Josephus describes in his written history, when, to grace the triumph of the conquerors, the ark of the testimony, and the candlestick, and the trumpets found in the Holy of holies, were selected from the spoils of Jerusalem, and borne aloft in the view of Rome's exulting citizens. We confess to a livelier sense of the reality of these things when we thus see them pictured before our eyes on the face of a contemporary monument. The invariable practice of the Jews is to turn aside from the road which passes beneath this arch, and, by making an exterior circuit, to avoid coming under the memorial of their nation's overthrow—thus superadding to the evidence of a monumental object what might well be termed the evidence of a monumental observation, of which it is interesting to know that it should thus have lasted during the long period of eighteen hundred years.

I cannot close this enumeration without adverting to another species of that evidence which lies in the subsisting material that serves to indicate, and so to prove, if not the details, at least the generalities of ancient history—we mean the evidence of ancient

coins, which have been well termed the medallions of history. They cannot strictly be called inarticulate because of their inscriptions; but still we would put them in the class of monumental, because they tell us a great deal more than is announced by the few words which appear upon their faces. Sometimes the very device represents a story; and though the words may give us little more than the name of a potentate, yet they may often satisfy us that the armies of that monarch had either passed over, or were even in possession of the country where such materials are found. For example, we learn a great deal from the known fact of Roman coins, with the names of Trajan, or the Antonines, or some other emperor upon them, being found everywhere in Britain, just as the tessellated and mosaic pavements are on this side of the Grampians, but nowhere beyond them. And to us it has always appeared not only a most interesting, but a most confirmatory agreement between the past accounts and present vestiges of some great movement in the affairs of the world—that the line of march assigned by history to Alexander's armies across Asia should be strewn with Macedonian coins, even as our own Britain is with the coins of the ancient Romans. We do not say that there lies in either of these facts any very detailed or particular information. Nevertheless, they bear a strong evidence to the general truth of history; and are fitted to act as a wholesome restorative on that mind, which, by giving itself waywardly and without all reserve (we may well add, without all reason) to the influence of doubts, has landed itself in a state of extravagant and diseased scepticism. Brief as our remarks have been on this monumental evidence, we should not have ventured to introduce them into a theological course, did we not conceive that Christianity is rich in the examples of it; and that while the evangelical narrative mainly reposes on the direct and historical evidences of our faith, it is further nobly accredited by these silent vestiges of its truth which are ever accumulating on our hands, as explored and brought to light by the antiquarians and the travellers of our modern day. It is a kind of evidence which should not be passed over unnoticed; and more especially as there are certain of its varieties—we mean its monumental practices or monumental observations as distinguished from monumental objects—out of which the elements of a resistless demonstration might be formed. I will for once anticipate the subject of the Christian evidences, by recommending, as far the most illustrious specimen of those

vestiges which powerfully bespeak its truth, a short tract, entitled Leslie's "Short and Easy Method with the Deists," where he irresistibly demonstrates the authenticity both of the Jewish and Christian histories from their origin downwards, by certain observations that took place under the Hebrew economy, and by the observation now both of our Sabbath and our sacraments.*

CHAPTER III.

ON THE INTERNAL HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. One cannot open the records of the evangelical dispensation, which, speaking largely, fill up the whole Bible, or compose the entire Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, without recognising a certain lofty and sustained moral earnestness which seems at least to actuate every writer, and shines forth upon all his pages. One thing is palpable throughout—its reigning and ascendant godliness. God is obviously the all in all of the Bible; and whatever system may be gathered out of its contents, He is the soul and centre of that system. Everywhere are that place and pre-eminence awarded which are proper to Him as supreme God. In the language of Bishop Butler, the world is all along viewed—as it is in none other of its histories—that is, as God's world, and all who live in it as God's creatures, whose actions should ever be determined and controlled by the paramount considerations of His will and His law. And this will is manifestly, we add uniformly, on the side of piety, and truth, and justice, and humanity, and self-government, and all the other duties of the most pure and perfect morality. The two or three cases which might be deemed at first sight as startling exceptions to this character of high and immaculate virtuousness, have been admirably well disposed of by Butler, and we accept his account of them as a full and satisfactory vindication. The extermination of the Canaanites, and spoiling of the Egyptians by the children of Israel, at the express bidding of God, and for a special object, serve no more to legalize either murder

* The monumental evidence is far from being fully explored; there is a rich mine of it in reserve for future travellers and investigators. For a few scriptural specimens of this kind of evidence, see Josh. vii. 26; 1 Sam. vi. 18; Josh. x. 27; Jer. xlix. 16; Obad. 1-4, as compared with Robinson's "Researches in Palestine," vol. i. p. 408, and ii. p. 435.

or fraud, than does the imposition of fines, or of capital punishments, by the civil magistrate in the administration of his government. They are as distinct from each other as the administrative acts of a government are distinct from its laws. There might hang a difficulty over certain of the proceedings of God as recorded in the Bible; but in the laws of God as promulgated there, there is nothing to perplex us. They are at one with the law of the heart, and with the ethical system of our best and most enlightened moralists.

2. We do not at present allege this pure and high morality of Scripture in argument for its divinity, but as affording a strong presumption for the honesty of those writers whose office it was to expound it; and who have expounded it in a way so perfectly spontaneous and single-minded, without the least appearance of laying a force upon themselves in the utterances given forth by them, all of which seem to flow in the natural current of their own feelings, and to bear the impress of their own character. They indeed seem, one and all of them, most thoroughly to have imbibed the spirit of that morality which they inculcate; and if written language have the power at all to impress one with the conviction of its sincerity, if it have any of the natural signs or characteristics of truth belonging to it —if ever the mind of an author can be seen in his writings, or if the effusions of the pen be capable of the same moral impress upon them as the utterances of the mouth, then is it difficult to interpret otherwise, than for the high-toned integrity of Moses, when he records his own foibles, while he denounces the perversities of Israel; and the faithfulness, as well as fervency of the psalmist—his truth in the inward parts, whether, when humbled to the dust, he pours forth the confessions of his own vileness, or breathes his desires and aspirations after the living God; or the intrepid honesty of the old prophets in their loud and lofty remonstrances against the sins of the people; or, last of all, the guileless simplicity of the apostles and disciples of our Lord, whose very character indeed, as portrayed by his Evangelists, is in itself a guarantee for the truthfulness of their narratives—insomuch that the most eloquent of infidels was constrained to acknowledge, that if the gospel be indeed an invention, the inventor was more miraculous than the hero. This argument were of weight, even had there been but one writer of the Bible. But it is mightily strengthened by the combination of so many, and these too of widely different ages,

yet all actuated by one spirit, a pervading and dominant sacredness—a spirit that might well be termed unearthly, for almost exclusively their own; or, at least, saving a few apocryphal writers, of the same priestly and selected nation, and of some imperfect and obscure family likeness to the historians and prophets and apostles of the Bible, theirs altogether is a spirit and a character so unique that we cannot recognise it in any authors of antiquity but themselves—as if all were fed and supplied from one perennial source; or as if sent to our world on some great design, though at sundry times and in divers manners, all were alike intent on their one errand, and alike impressed by a sense of their high calling.*

3. Passing over much of what is even peculiar in my own views, let me earnestly recommend, however, your attention to our treatment of Hume's infidelity on the subject of the Christian miracles, as, if you accept the refutation that I have ventured to offer, it will give a thoroughly experimental character to the literary credentials of revelation. And yet in spite of all my value for this principle, there is another lesson which I am still more anxious to impress, and that is, the self-evidencing power of the Bible, in virtue of which it carries conviction along with it even to the minds of its own simple readers, who have nothing else to proceed upon than those marks of honesty and trustworthiness which they descry in the volume itself. This evidence is not confined to the manifestations which the subject-matter of the Christian doctrine makes of its own adaptations to the fears, and the feelings, and the conscious guilt of humanity. You may recollect the distinction I made between the internal historical and the external historical evidence for the truth of the evangelical narrative. I will not say of an unlettered peasant, who has received but the average of popular education, that he is prepared for appreciating the latter evidence, that is, the external historical; but conversant as he is with the natural signs of these in spoken, and to a certain degree, too, in written language, he is to a considerable extent qualified, if not for rightly

* The high tone of sacredness and pure morality which pervades all the writings of the Old and New Testaments, a most impressive token of their credibility. And the argument mightily enhanced by the number and distance and unconnectedness of the writers, along with the unique character which they maintain in contrast to all authorship not derived from the Bible. This peculiarity can only be explained on the supposition that all the books of Scripture flowed from one and the same supernal source. It is felt by men of moral earnestness that the Bible speaks thus for itself.—See John viii. 46; x. 4; Matt. xii. 25-32.

estimating, at least for being rightly impressed, by what I have called the internal historical evidence for the truth of Christianity. As for the evidence grounded on that tone of sincerity and sacredness wherewith the writings of Scripture are pervaded, it is an evidence of which he might feel the force, and into which he can fully enter. He, too, can discern the natural signs of truth of which I have spoken—the simplicity, the directness, the obvious moral earnestness—that whole spirit of seriousness and solemnity which is so manifestly in keeping at least with the assumed character of messengers to the world from the upper sanctuary, and that on some theme of grave and mighty import, on the most urgent duties and interests of those to whom they addressed themselves. Of all these, as I said before, he can feel the force, though I do not pretend to say that he can compute the force of them. But neither, I believe, could the most profound of our literary and scientific men compute the force of them; for the elements of this proposed computation, though real and weighty, are not very measurable. You could not arithmetically state at how great a probability this one part and that other of the internal historical evidence ought to be estimated; so that in this department of the evidences, though any peasant may undergo the direct, there is no man, whether peasant or philosopher, who can fully and accurately describe the reflex process. Now you remember that in a former instance—the instance, I mean, of the miraculous evidence—I did, I hope, make it manifest that the direct process had been gone through soundly and well, though the reflex process never had been delineated for at least 1700 years from the days of the apostles—when it was at length found to coincide with, and lend an ample confirmation to, the direct convictions of those to whom it was altogether unknown: and that thus the evidence of miracles is still doing its proper and immediate work on the minds of inquirers, whether or not they shall ever attend to or ever understand the sceptical objection of Hume, and the refutation which has been given of it. But if the direct process be independent of the reflex in this instance, why may it not be so in all other instances, and more especially in the instance now before us? If, in the one case, the direct told, and told not only effectually but rightly, and long before the reflex was discovered, why may it not, in the other case, tell both effectually and rightly, although the reflex should never be discovered at all? The force of that evidence which lies in the obvious characteristics of truth and

honesty that are on the face of the Old and New Testaments, might be a real though not a calculable quantity. But though no man, therefore, can tell us *how* great, this might not hinder its being so great as rightly to carry the convictions of those who, in the act of reading these works, with simple moral earnestness, have laid open their minds to the influence thereof. In other words, this evidence too, like the evidence of miracles, might be doing, and doing soundly and well, its own immediate work on thousands of learners who are utterly incapable of philosophizing it. I trust I have already said enough to convince you, that however interesting a work it may be to philosophize any branch of evidence, it is not necessary that the evidence should be philosophized for the purpose of being brought to bear on the subject mind, and working there its own rightful impression upon the understanding. Here, then, in this evidence—the evidence which lies in the marks given throughout the Bible of the sacredness and sincerity of its various writers, an evidence patent to the intuitive perception, and fitted to engage the moral sympathies of all men—here might we behold the instrumental cause of many a well-founded belief, of many a sound and right and saving conversion to the faith of the gospel. This is one of the many ingredients which make up what has been called the self-evidencing power of the Bible—felt, and most legitimately felt, in cottages, though never yet adequately philosophized in any of the schools of learning—a light struck out between the Bible and our own moral perceptions, and sufficient to guide the way of many an humble inquirer into heaven. It is thus difficult to read any of the scriptural writers, if we but read with some degree of moral earnestness, without the feeling of their deep sincerity, and which must tell therefore to a certain extent upon our confidence in the act of perusing them. But truth has various signatures; and it is possible that, on a leisurely and reflex examination of the writings themselves, we might discover some of them. It is well to be possessed at the first by an author's seeming seriousness; but on looking to his work and to its subject-matter, we might fall in with other tests of integrity besides this, which, if wanting, will nullify the promises given at the outset, and therefore subvert his credit; or which, if verified, will serve to ratify and confirm it.

4. Now the first of these marks, as we have already intimated, is the thorough and sustained consistency of each writer with himself; and this mark or criterion is all the more decisive, the

more minute and varied and circumstantial are the statements or narratives in which he deals. There are many of the single pieces, both in the Old and New Testaments, which, separately and in themselves, are most fitting subjects for the application of this touchstone, insomuch that if they are made to undergo this ordeal and come forth unhurt and vindicated, a great deal more might have been gained by the process than the mere refutation of a charge, but over and above, a strong substantive argument for the veracity of their authors. It is thus that the enemies of our faith have, in more instances than one, called forth its friends and its defenders to a field of battle on which they had never before entered; and where, besides repelling the attack, they earned a large positive accession of such proofs and evidences on the side of the Christian revelation as till then had been unnoticed and unheard of. For after reconciling the alleged contradictions on which infidels tried to discredit the evangelical story, they, in prosecution of the walk on which they had been led by the challenge of their adversaries, have discovered such a number of recondite harmonies and before unobserved relations between one part and another, as no impostor would ever have contrived; or as, if he had contrived them, he never would have so placed beneath the apparent and the palpable, as to have been hidden from all eyes for many centuries, till excavated by the learning and the labours of a far distant posterity. The only account which can be given of these numerous and to all appearance these artless, unlaboured, and undesigned consistencies, is that they have a common groundwork in that truth which is ever consistent with itself; and the argument becomes all the more satisfactory when there is the same author for more than one of these separate scriptural compositions—as if in the fabrication of these any imposture have been at all concerned, there is a wider field of comparison, and so a larger exposure for the detection of it—a greater number, as it were, of vulnerable places through which an opening might be made for the discovery of some falsehood or frailty, should any such there be. It is thus that in the Pentateuch, of which Moses was mainly the author, the second, third, and fourth book admit of being confronted with the remaining one, which contains a review or recapitulation of the whole; and accordingly, in Graves' Lectures on this portion of Scripture, we have those very harmonies evolved which compose the kind of argument that we are now speaking of. This, however, is still more im-

pressively given by Dr. Paley, when he exhibits the minute and circumstantial agreements that he searches out among the epistles of Paul—all the more impressive that they have thus to be sought for instead of lying patently and ostensibly before us.

5. But this evidence grows both in richness and strength when we enlarge the comparison, by instituting a cross-examination between one scriptural author and another. And so it comes forth in full power under the hands of Paley, who, in his *Horæ Paulinæ*, has given a masterly specimen of the way in which truth might be elicited, and from no other data before him than the contents of two or more ancient records having a common subject, without the knowledge of any foreign testimonies whatever on their behalf, simply from the minute and manifold adaptation of part and counterpart between them. He constructs his argument, as conclusive and irrefragable as can well be imagined, from the depositions only of two witnesses—of Paul, the author of his own epistles, on the one hand, and the writer of his direct history in the Acts of the Apostles on the other. Altogether he presents us with a resistless demonstration, and so multiplies the instances, that, if laid together and the arithmetic of probabilities were applied to them, the amount of proof would be found on the clearest principles of computation to be quite overwhelming. He has been followed by others in the same track of investigation, a track which he may be said to have first opened—who, if not so striking, it may be owing to their not being so fortunate as he in having alighted on the most fitting materials for such an argument. Besides Graves we would recommend Blunt, who constructs his reasoning on the coincidences which he points out between the Gospels of the four Evangelists.

6. So long as we are employed in evincing the consistency of an author with himself, the evidence thence deduced is strictly internal. The question is (a mere question of nomenclature) whether the evidence of those numerous consistencies which obtain between one author and another should not more properly be referred to the class of the external evidences. There is no inclination for doing so while engaged in comparing one scriptural author with another—as Paul with the writer of the Acts of the Apostles, and the writers of the four Gospels among themselves. The disposition is to rank the evidence elicited by this last process amongst the internal evidences, because all

the materials out of which it is extracted happen to lie within the limits of one volume, that is, the Bible. But I would have you to remark, that in respect of force and quality, the evidence for the veracity of one scriptural writer may be altogether the same which is drawn from the sustained agreement between his narratives and that of another writer, whether the second be a scriptural or an ex-scriptural writer. All the separate pieces of the Bible, it should be remarked, came out separately at the first; and there is surely nothing in the mere circumstance of their being bound together into one compilation, with one general title, which can in the least affect the strength, however much it may have reduced the impression, of the argument that is grounded on the nicer harmonies between them, which can only be made palpable by a laborious and searching examination. In this respect, the comparison of the scriptural Luke, author of the book of Acts, with the scriptural Paul, is on the same footing as is the comparison of scriptural Luke with ex-scriptural Josephus. Yet it is in passing from the former to the latter comparison that we are apt to feel as if passing from the study of an internal to, or at least toward, the study of an external evidence. If this were merely a question of names, we might pass it by; but it is truly a question which affects the reality and the substance of things; for our strong tendency is to set a far greater argumentative value on such agreements as we can make out between Josephus or Philo and some one of the evangelists or apostles, than on the like agreements of the evangelists and apostles with each other. I make this observation now to prepare you for expecting, that whereas in the study of the historical argument, we are apt to look for it in its main strength and validity only among the works of profane or uncanonical writers, we may in fact meet, and in greater force, within the confines of the sacred record itself, the very evidence we are in quest of. This we hope to show palpably enough in other parts of the historical argument. And meanwhile, it is well that we can say of the evidence which now engages us, that is the evidence grounded on those nicer harmonies between one writer and another, which serve most of all to indicate the common veracity of each, whether it be evolved by the comparison of one scriptural writer with another, or by the comparison of a scriptural with an ex-scriptural, that we have enough of both. For the best exhibition of the first, I again refer you to Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ;* and for a convincing display of the

second, I would bid you read the First Part of Lardner's "Credibility of the Gospel History," in which he undertakes to show that the facts occasionally mentioned in the New Testament are confirmed by passages of ancient authors, who were contemporary with our Saviour or His apostles, or lived near their time.*

7. When two or more historians write on the same subject, there are two distinct sorts of evidence that may be educed by comparing them together. The first we have already adverted to, and may be denominated the circumstantial evidence, as grounded on that sustained agreement, even in the minutest traits and incidents of the narrative, which can only be accounted for by the common fidelity wherewith each describes the same subject-matter. This is an evidence greatly enhanced by the absence of all seeming art or design in the construction of the respective histories. For while nothing is more difficult to disguise than the endeavour to sustain a harmony amongst writers who have entered into concert or collusion with each other—on the other hand, there is nothing strained or artificial in each giving forth his own independent statement, either of what he has seen with his own eyes, or learned on the authorities whom he himself hath consulted for his own separate satisfaction. But besides this circumstantial evidence arising from such an agreement in things minute and incidental, there is also the multiple evidence afforded by the composition and number of testimonies for one and the same event. This, in fact, is the most direct and obvious benefit of combined testimony, the one most palpable and most counted on; and therefore not only required in courts of justice, but felt also to be the greatest support and strengthener of historic faith. At the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. The rapidity wherewith the evidence grows at each successive confirmation of it, is felt by all, though calculated by few. If each separate testimony of four, that had been rendered in favour of any particular event, yielded of itself the probability of ten to one on the side of its truth, the concurrence of the four would yield a probability equal to the product of all these, or be as much as ten thousand to one for our belief of the truth of the thing in question.

8. Now if men will persist in designing every proof as an internal one which is gathered from within the limits of the

* A vast mine of internal evidence in the harmonies, only yet elicited in part, from the comparison between one part of Scripture with another.—1 Cor. ii. 13.

Bible—then, ere we quit the subject of the internal evidences, do we meet, and in its greatest possible strength, with that argument which is founded on multiple and combined testimonies. In the volume of the New Testament we have, for the miracles of Christ, the express depositions of no less than four direct and formal historians, who each charges himself with the task of narrating the life and doings of our Saviour, and who each, too, in his own person, deserves the utmost confidence of his readers, both for his opportunities of information and for a perfect integrity, assured to us, in that age of persecution and most cruel sufferings for the faith, by the highest of all guarantees. Each writes in the manner, and fully sustains the character, of an independent historian; and though the evangelist Mark most probably availed himself, in certain of his passages, of the previously written Gospel by Matthew, yet even he, it is obvious, gives forth his statements from his own distinct sources of information. He, it is understood, drew his materials chiefly from Peter, whose disciple and companion he was; while Luke compiled his narrative, as he himself informs us, from the carefully weighed reports of those who companied with our Saviour during the time of His abode upon earth. John and Matthew, again, were the eye-witnesses throughout of Christ's personal history; so that in the Gospels alone we have four separate and independent narratives, detailing either what the authors themselves heard and saw, or what they were informed of at first-hand. The histories themselves demonstrate in every sentence that there was no partnership, no conjunct or preconcerted movement among the authors. Here, then, we have what is ever esteemed a first-rate evidence in all judgments and criticisms on common history, the evidence not of one, but of four professed and formal historians, all of them contemporary with, and one-half of them the personal observers of the events which are related by them; and each of them deponing in his own name, and that in greatest variety and abundance, to the miracles of the gospel. Let it be recollected that these accounts were published separately, at different times and on different occasions, and that you must multiply the distinct credibilities of these individual witnesses into each other, in order to obtain the immense product which represents the whole force of their united testimonies. There is nothing that can at all compare with this in any other of the narratives of ancient history. It eludes observation now, because these separate works are all presented to us in one

volume. But the real strength of the argument lies in the state and circumstances of the evidence then, when four different men, each on his own account, publishes his own story, and gives us the benefit of four distinct and lengthened attestations, laid before the world at the period, too, of its fresh recollections; and when the eyes, not only of thousands of friends, suffering for their convictions on the side of Christianity, but of tens of thousands of enemies still alive, and labouring for its overthrow, had witnessed a number of the scenes and passages of that history, which now stood forth in open exposure to brave all the contempt and contradiction which so many vigilant observers might have in their power to cast upon it. We repeat, that nothing like this can be said of any narrative which has come down to us from antiquity; and when we speak of the mighty accession given to the credibility of the whole, by the circumstance of there being four narrators instead of one—we ask in name of common sense, why the presentation of it within the boards of one volume should disguise the strength of our argument, or whether it be in the power of a bookbinder to annihilate this evidence?

9. Let me now remark that the external has been far more completely stated and philosophized than the internal, and that the latter presents a much larger portion of territory yet unexplored for such original views and observations as have never yet been given. Understand me again, however, that the actual operation of this evidence on the thousands and tens of thousands of Scripture readers, even in the humblest walks of society, does not wait the reflex and philosophical exposition of it. The latter may not be completed for centuries to come; the former may have been going on most healthfully and most productively from the first publication of the various pieces which make up the New Testament. But while there is much less to do in the explanation of the external than of the internal evidence, I would have you to understand that even the former is not yet exhausted. As far back as thirty-two years ago, I was struck with the imperfect representation given, even by such writers as Lardner and Paley, of the prodigious strength of the historical evidence for the miracles of the gospel, and this arising from their post-dating of the argument behind the time of the original writers; whereas I think it can be satisfactorily made out, on the clearest principles, that their original testimony is far stronger than the tacit testimony of the Christian Fathers—a principle

this which admits of being further extended, so as to prove that the testimony of the Christian Fathers is, on every received and ordinary principle of criticism, far stronger than that of either the Jewish or heathen authors of the three first centuries. There is a strange delusion on this subject, which, if but exposed and broken up, would make such commonplace infidelity, for example, as that of Gibbon, perfectly innocuous, for he never once grapples with the testimony of Christians, either of the apostolic or succeeding ages. Now, to get the better of this strange yet strong delusion, let me make the supposition that Mark's gospel had not been admitted into the canon of Scripture; but that, instead of this, it had come down to us as the earliest, and so taking the lead, in point of time, of all the compositions of the Christian Fathers. He would in this case have stood distinctly out from the Bible, and appeared to us in the light of a very full and explicit and articulate witness in favour of the miraculous events recorded there. Instead of Mark the Evangelist, he would have come down to us as Mark one of the Christian Fathers; and this additional testimony to that of the Bible writers would have blazoned forth to a hundred-fold greater extent than it actually has done, both in Lardner's "Credibility," and in the books generally on the Christian evidences. Such would have been the influence of this his recorded testimony in point of feeling. Now, let us make a right and rational computation of its real value in point of fact. The comparison, you will perceive, is between Mark's gospel, as forming a part of Scripture, and stitched up there with the other pieces of the Sacred Volume, and Mark's gospel, as handed down to us apart from Scripture, and in the same shape with a Clement's Epistle or a Justin Martyr's Apology, carried forward along the stream of ages as a separate publication. We know well the difference which this would make in point of impression. In the former situation—that is, in the Bible—he forms part of a book, the whole of which is under trial, so that the whole Bible, and he among the rest, stands forth as a panel at the bar; whereas in the latter situation, or among the Christian Fathers, he would have stood forth as an evidence in the witness-box. Such is the impression; but put forth attention, I pray you, and look at the reality. What is it that has given Mark the rank of a scriptural writer?—what is it that secured for him a place in the canon? The universal consent of the Christians in that age that he was altogether worthy of a place in it. And, truly

astonishing result, it is because the men of his own time thought so highly of him, that we of the present day think so poorly of him. On the other hand, what is the circumstance that would have kept Mark out of the Bible?—that would have made him an ex-scriptural instead of a scriptural, an uncanonical instead of a canonical writer? Just the inferior credit he held among his contemporaries—just because of his lower estimation then than either Matthew or Luke or John; and so another repetition of the wonder, of the downright oddity—nay, if you call it absurdity, you will not be far wrong—the marvel and the mystery is, that had he been so little thought of in his own day as to have been left out of Scripture, he would on that very account have been all the better thought of in our day. I will venture to say that our treatment of any other ancient profane authors whom we esteem and have confidence in, is not only different from this, but diametrically the reverse of this; and that in very proportion to the credit which they enjoyed then with their contemporaries, is the credit which they enjoy now with us, their distant posterity. Such is the rule of sound criticism in all other cases; and is it not passing strange that only when the Bible is under reckoning and suspicion is it turned into the rule of contraries? What I want is, that on this question the scales should fall from your eyes. Mark was adjudged a place in the Bible by a public in those days, whose cruel martyrdoms for the truth form the highest possible guarantees that they had no interest in being deceived; but that all possible care and vigilance would be put forth, lest the sufferings they must have been glad to escape from, had conscience let them, should be incurred in support of a falsehood. The Gospel according to Mark took rank with the other three, because as good as if—written by an apostle—it had been the gospel according to Peter, and Mark had been his amanuensis. The real weight of his evidence, whatever the feeling or the fancy may be, is vastly greater because his place is within and not without the sacred confines of Holy Writ; and, in the concurrence of these four disciples, I call on you to recognise the concurrence of four first-rate and superlative testimonies.

10. We know that there was a number of ex-scriptural memoirs of our Saviour in circulation among His disciples after His death. To these Luke refers in the introduction of his Gospel; and what was it that led him to undertake this work?—just the imperfection of these memoirs, which left a fuller and more

authentic narrative of the doings and discourses of our Saviour a desideratum with the Christian public of those days. Accordingly, the Gospel by Luke was published; and, as the natural effect of this, these earlier memoirs were all of them superseded. They ceased to be in demand, just as any fragment or imperfect narrative now would be no longer sought after, if a complete and authoritative history, which everybody confided in, and which gave all the information that was wanted, should be brought forward to supplement their deficiencies and occupy their place. In those days of laborious book-making, when all that was done in that way was done by an operose process of transcription, we are not to suppose that these memoirs would continue to be multiplied after they had become a drug in the market by the general run being directed to better and fuller narratives. Such was the state of matters then; and it is at once decisive of the greater value of Luke's history, as evidence for the truth of the gospel miracles, than of all these written accounts which were current at the time of his publication, but which disappeared before it, because driven from the field. And yet, in defiance of all the ordinary and received principles of criticism, this just judgment on the part of Luke's contemporaries is not ratified but reversed by the judgment of the men of the present day. Suppose that by any accident we should light on one of these memoirs, with such signatures of genuineness as convinced us that it had been in circulation previous to his gospel, and just such a one as he has referred to at the outset of his own history —how enlightened and enlarged we should all feel at the discovery, and speak of our new-found treasure as a mighty accession to the historical evidence for the truth of Christianity! Does it not mark a strange insensibility to the hundred-fold greater evidence that we have in our possession, which not only does not quell our appetite for more, but leaves an appetite of a truly morbid and marvellous description—an appetite infinitely more regaled with the crumbs and fragments that are about the table than with the rich and solid viands wherewith the table itself is so sumptuously laden? A very brief notice by Quadratus lights up a greater sense of sufficiency than all that Matthew and Mark and Luke and John set before us. Now this note by Quadratus is but of one or two of the many miracles recorded in Scripture; and probably, made up as it is of a single paragraph, bears a very small proportion, in variety and fulness of information, to each of the memoirs which Luke takes notice of. Now

if these, in existence before Luke wrote, were of so little comparative value that he superseded them—why should a thing of less value than these be looked upon as of any great weight and importance in the way of supplementing Luke? It is well that we have this testimony of Quadratus; nor do I wonder that Paley, in adverting to it, should characterize it as a noble testimony. But let us not forget the hundred-fold nobler testimony of Luke himself, nor, in our diseased appetency for evidence of greatly less validity, and a craving for more of the same sort, shut our eyes to the greatly surpassing worth of an evidence anterior to Quadratus; and on every sound principle of historic faith, all the more to be depended on, that Luke was contemporary with the events which he relates, and met with the unbounded confidence of the contemporary Christian public for whom he writes—whereas Quadratus flourished half a century after him. I feel persuaded, both of Dr. Lardner and Dr. Paley, that even they, when looking at this testimony, did mentally place Luke at the bar, and Quadratus in the witness-box.

11. But more than this, we have not only five direct historical compositions in the New Testament, the four Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, all teeming with accounts of miracles—we have twenty-two writings over and above, the works of four additional authors, that is, Paul and James and Peter and Jude. None of them attempt aught like a direct narrative of the life of our Saviour, or the doings of His apostles. There was a limit to the number of these, beyond which there could be no further demand for any more. In that age of busy action, when all were so much occupied with the direct work of propagating the gospel, there would be little leisure for authorship—though, of course, we must lay our account with as much as would be required by the exigencies of the times. There might be a call for a certain number of Gospels, yet none beyond this. The Gospel by Matthew is understood to have been written for the use of Jewish Christians. Paul and Peter had their distinct fields of labour; and we might well imagine, that, for the supply of the churches within their respective spheres, Luke, the companion of the one, and Mark, the intimate friend and disciple of the other, felt a practical necessity, or at least desirableness for their several histories being penned, while, as is well known, the Gospel of John was published a good many years after the three others, and expressly written by him for the purpose of supplementing much of what they had omitted in the preparation of their nar-

ratives. If it be asked, why, after this, have we no Gospels by others of the New Testament writers? it might be remarked, in the first place, that Paul and Peter may be said to have both acquitted themselves of these tasks, by the hands of their literary companions, Luke and Mark; and as to James and Jude, there might be a very good reason for their not engaging in this work, because, for every useful and necessary purpose, the work was already done, and the demand of the Christian world for these histories had now been met and satisfied. The want was already filled up; and that was not a period for the labours of the pen beyond what the real exigencies of the Church required. That was truly not the age or the occasion in which a superfluous and unnecessary authorship could be at all looked for.

12. Still we have other and additional authorship within the limits of the New Testament, in the shape of fourteen Epistles by Paul, one by James, two by Peter, one by Jude, three by the apostle John, and lastly, his Book of Revelation. In none of them do the authors set themselves to the work of a continuous narrative of miracles. With the exception of the Book of Revelation, which was a prophecy, the object of all these other writings was moral, or didactic, or hortatory, and not historical—a service accomplished otherwise, and which could not be attempted any more, without such a vain and useless repetition as there really was no time for. But they behoved to find time for such other compositions as the state and the emergencies of any particular churches might have required; and none more likely than letters, whether to particular congregations or to the general body of Christians, by the apostles, who had either formed these congregations, or were men of universally known character and weight among the disciples at large. Now let it well be observed, that though in these compositions there be no formal history of the miracles, yet that we can gather from them a various and multiple evidence of their reality, and that in a still more impressive and satisfactory form than if fully and formally announced to us. There is no laboured attempt to prove them, far less is there any parading about them. But what is greatly better in the way of evidence—if not proved, they are assumed and proceeded on, and are often the topics of incidental, yet of the most perfectly free and fearless allusion, as if the objects of a universal and common recognition by both parties in the correspondence—as when Paul in the Romans speaks of Christ being raised for our justification; and so, in the course

of his doctrinal argument, confirms the great master miracle of the New Testament; or when he tells the Corinthians of the Saviour having been seen to ascend up into heaven, and speaks of His resurrection in proof of the general rising of all men from the dead; or when he instructs the same people how to use their miraculous gifts, and in vindication of his own authority as an apostle, appeals to the signs and miracles which he had wrought amongst them; or, as in the Epistle to the Galatians, when boldly reproving them for their errors, and pleading for the all-sufficiency of faith, he puts the question, He that worketh miracles amongst you, did he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? And not to swell the number, as Peter, when he reports the miracle of Christ's transfiguration, and the voice from heaven which he himself heard, of this being His beloved Son, in whom He was well pleased. Let it well be remarked, however, that in all those New Testament compositions which are not historical, these references to the miracles form but a very minute fraction of the bulk and body of the writings; and that in some of them we do not recollect any allusion to the miracles at all—as in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the Epistles to Titus and Philemon, the three Epistles of John, and lastly, the Epistle of Jude. It is well that you bear this in mind, when we pass from the scriptural to the ex-scriptural, in our examination of the documents of Christian antiquity.

13. Nothing, however, can be more confirmatory than the perfect understanding of the truth of these miracles in the first age of Christianity, shared between the writers of these various apostolic letters in which they are adverted to, and the parties to whom they were addressed. They give a mighty addition to the more direct evidence of the four Gospels and history of the Acts; and let not the circumstance of their being bound up together in one volume throw disguise over the strength of the multiform, and recollect, too, contemporaneous testimony, which is yielded by them for the Divine commission of Christ and His apostles.*

* The superior claims of the canonical writers gave them their place in Scripture, and the superior estimation in which they were held by their cotemporaries turned the demand of the public from the uncanonical, most of whom ultimately disappeared, and the rest have been transmitted to the present time with a vastly inferior weight of testimony in their favour than can be adduced on behalf of the authors of the New Testament.—Luke i. 1-4; Acts i. 1, 2; Rom. i. 4-11; xv. 18, 19; 1 Cor. xii. 4, 7-11; xiii. 1; xiv. 5, 6, 22-25; xv. 4, 8, 12-17; 2 Cor. xii. 12; Gal. ii. 5; Eph. i. 20; iv. 8-10; Phil. ii. 9-11; Col. ii. 12; 1 Thess. iv. 14; 1 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Tim. ii. 8; Heb. iv. 14; vi. 20; ix. 24; xi. 13; xii. 2; xiii. 20; James v. 14, 15; 1 Pet i. 3, 4, 21; iii. 22; 2 Pet. i. 16-18; Rev. i. 18; ii. 8.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE EXTERNAL HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. It is a very general apprehension among writers on the evidences of Christianity, that, ere they can reach an external evidence, they must go forth of the Bible, and seek after the corroboration of its recorded facts among ex-scriptural authors. I trust I have proved to your satisfaction, that before we go forth of the Bible we come into contact with the very kind of evidence which these writers are in quest of, and differing from it only in this, that it is immeasurably greater in degree, inasmuch as the testimony of accepted cotemporary authors, who were either the eye-witnesses or ear-witnesses by but one remove of the events related by them, is of far greater historical value than the testimony either of subsequent authors, or of those whose only information is but that of a vague and distant hearsay. This better and higher evidence has been much overlooked by inquirers, and that chiefly, I believe, from the circumstance of its all being presented to us within the limits of one volume. Nevertheless, the state of the matter stands thus—that we have the concurrence of no less than four very particular and distinct narratives, by men writing independently of each other, and all of first-rate credit and acceptance in their day, and no less than twenty-one epistles, the greater number by four additional writers, on whom the Christian public, in the middle of the first century, or a few years after the death of the Saviour, placed an equal and a most implicit reliance. These letters abound in expressions which imply a full belief on the part of their authors in the miraculous origin of Christianity; and more especially in that most stupendous of all its miracles, the resurrection of our Saviour, and which also imply a like belief on the part of numerous Christian societies, consisting of many hundreds and thousands to whom they address themselves. There is nothing like the tenth or twentieth part of this initial light, if it may be so termed, to irradiate the outset of any other ancient history that has come down to us from past ages.

2. But before entering on the consideration of the subsequent testimonies, it is well that you look to the sort of references made to the miracles of the gospel in those works of the New

Testament which are not historical—as this may warn you what kind of references you are to look for in the writings of the Christian Fathers. The four apostles, Paul, and Peter, and James, and Jude, who have bequeathed to us epistles and nothing else, did not feel themselves called upon to construct any lengthened or continuous narratives of the life of our Saviour, on the ground, we have no doubt, that this service was already accomplished, and therefore, when they make allusion to the miracles at all, it is but incidentally, or as it comes in their way and serves the purpose of enforcing their exhortation or confirming their argument. Now, if these apostles, so well qualified for the task, had the good of the Christian Church required it, did not feel themselves called upon to give a formal history of Christ and His doings, or in other words, to add a fifth gospel to the four already in existence, much less would the Christian Fathers, either of that or of any succeeding age, feel themselves so called upon—as in their hands it would have been still more a work of supererogation, and never could have been the object of general demand, because never the object of the same confidence and esteem as the gospels already extant, and which were either written by apostles, or had the benefit of known apostolical recommendation. But if we need not look for such histories from any of the earlier Christian Fathers, what sort of works would we naturally expect from them? Just the very works which we find them to have written—letters to particular churches, either for the correction of abuses, or for the encouragement of disciples in the faith—writings of an argumentative and hortatory, rather than of an historical character—remonstrances addressed to their persecutors, whether among the Jews or Gentiles. In short, such publications as were called forth by the exigencies of the time—works of reproof, and doctrine, and practical piety, for those within the pale of Christianity—works of advocacy, when either infidelity or persecution called them forth to a vindication of their character and views. In the most of such works we should just look for the very kind of references to the miracles of the gospel that we meet with in the epistles of the New Testament; and if we find these references made freely, and fearlessly, and without reserve, whenever the occasion seemed to require it—if we find no symptoms either of a wish to parade the miracles on the one hand, as if not already sufficiently known and believed of all men acquainted with the truth; or of a wish to disguise them,

as if tremulous of an exposure that would bring upon them the detection of a foul and artful imposture—if we find them spoken of in fit season, but always in such a way as to imply that they were the objects of a common recognition between the writers and the Christian public whom they were addressing, as things of which there was no doubt, and in the mention of which, therefore, they faltered not and felt no hesitation—I cannot imagine a more perfect form than this for the purpose of corroboration; and it will ever abide a standing memorial for the truth of Christianity, that the miracles by which it was ushered into the world, and on which it claimed the acceptance of men, are in the writings of the Christian Fathers, from the very earliest times, as currently spoken of and referred to as real events as any of the best known and most generally believed occurrences in the history of the period.

3. But there is one important difference between the contemporary epistles in the New Testament, and the subsequent epistles in other works of the Christian Fathers. In the former, there is no reference either to the Acts or the Gospels, unless any will regard 2 Cor. viii. 18, as a reference by Paul to the Gospel of Luke. There scarcely could be any such references—for some of the epistles were among the earliest pieces of the New Testament which had made their appearance, and could not therefore refer to works not yet published, and, what perhaps might require several years more, not yet fully circulated and known. And what is more—each of the New Testament writers, speaking in his own name and of his own conscious or assumed authority, as an inspired man, would not feel the necessity of fortifying or building up his argument on the foundation of what others had said before—setting himself forth in the direct character of a messenger from heaven, and whose only concern therefore was the delivery of that message. But mark how differently related the Christian Fathers stood to the compositions of the New Testament, in not only being subsequent to these, but principally in that they did feel themselves to be of a lower grade, and the scriptural authors to be set on the higher platform, both of being actually in themselves, and of being looked up to by the Christian public at large, as inspired writers and direct messengers from heaven. What else could we expect in these circumstances than incessant appeals to the various works and writings of the New Testament by the Christian Fathers, and that for the purpose of finding acceptance with

their readers for their own views, and strengthening thereby their own cause and argument, whatever that may be? Now this is precisely what we find. Over and above some such immediate references to the miracles of Christ and His apostles, as we meet with in the epistles of the New Testament, we have constant allusions and references of all sorts, both expressed and implied, to the sacred writings themselves, and that in terms which demonstrate the utmost confidence and respect on the part of these Fathers, as well as the high standing in the Christian world of the works from which they quote. Now mark the big, the mighty importance of such testimonies as these. Even though the Fathers had never deponed in their own persons to the miracles of the Gospel, which they very frequently do, these references, and in terms of such high veneration, to the books in which the miracles are recorded, would of themselves have formed a most ample and sufficient testimony. When you quote from a book in such a way as to mark your sense of its authority, you may be said to homologate that book, and to stamp all the credit which attaches to your own name on the various contents of it. Now, we repeat that this has been done for the New Testament by the Christian Fathers, in the utmost abundance and the greatest variety of forms. Descending from the age of the apostles themselves, you pass downwards, with all the force and fulness of an increasing river, along the course of succeeding centuries. It is of these that Lardner has made so laborious and ample a collection; and they may be said to form the main strength of the ex-scriptural historical evidence for the truth of Christianity. They consist of a series of references and quotations gathered from the Christian Fathers, each marking the credit and confidence in which the writers of the New Testament were held by themselves—sufficiently expressive, therefore, of their testimony to the facts recorded in the evangelical writings, whether they had in their own person noticed these facts or not. The writer subsequent to Julius Cæsar, who quotes him, and gives proof of his faith in him, as a good and credible historian, gives what may be termed a wholesale testimony for the history by Cæsar, whether he condescends or not on any of the events in that history. It is mainly on the strength of such testimonies as these, that, in profane history, the later authors serve to uphold the credit of the older ones—not by telling us all their informations and sayings over again, but by making it known to their own public and to posterity, that they held them

to be good and credible informers. Of this sort of evidence, then, the evidence of such subsequent testimonies as we have now been setting forth to you, there is a tenfold greater force and frequency for the New Testament writers than for any other of equal or higher antiquity that can be named. We can adduce nothing like it for Herodotus, or Thucydides, or Xenophon, or Cicero, or Livy, or Tacitus; and on what principle these should be the object of a trust and a deference well-nigh universal, while apostles and evangelists are the objects of suspicion, if not of scorn, is one of those paradoxes of infidelity, which I should like any of its champions to explain, and which, till explained, must ever remind me of such expressions as "the mystery of iniquity," "the love of darkness rather than light," "the strong delusion" to which men are given over, so as that they shall repudiate the truth and believe a lie.

4. And there is one remark of the utmost importance that you should attend to and appreciate, as you will find in it a most unequivocal proof of the veneration and confidence in which the books of the New Testament were held from the very first, and throughout all the succeeding ages of Christian antiquity. What I mean is the appropriate and special designation given by the Jews, in the days of the Saviour, to their Scriptures, and which designation from the very outset was also given to the Christian Scriptures—from the moment they were published, or at least from the moment they were known to have come forth either from the hands or under the sanction of the apostles. You are aware that what originally was the common designation, expressive of all the individuals of a particular class when once applied, and more especially with the definite article, to some one select and peculiar individual of that class—comes at length to be restricted to that individual, and applied to none others of the genus to which it belongs. Take baptism for an example. It signifies generally an immersion, of whatever kind, and done on whatever occasion. But when this name was employed to designate the great initiatory rite of the Christian religion, and more especially when the habit was firmly established of speaking of this rite as ὁ βαπτισμὸς, this term, however wide and various the application of it may have previously been, never suggested the idea of any other dipping than that which took place at the ministration of this sacrament. The same thing applies to the word γραφαὶ, which originally denoted writings—any writings—and might have been applied indiscriminately to

all the products of human authorship. But this term was at length employed to designate certain writings which were reputed to be of Divine authorship; and after the fashion became common, more particularly with the prefixing of the definite article, so that the *αἱ γραφαὶ* were spoken of—no one, whether speaker or hearer, ever understood the term in any other sense than the collection of writings held among the Jews to be sacred, and of Divine inspiration. There is nothing to surprise one in this—for what is *βίβλος* but a book? or the Greek name applied at the first to all books, but afterwards restricted to the Sacred Volume which was denominated *ὁ βίβλος*; and which men no more confounded with other books, than we of the present day would confound the Bible, or have our attention carried off by this title from that one book to any other in the whole range of authorship. The same observation is true of the Scriptures, which word, in its generic and original sense, means the writings —but which is now applied, in a sense altogether select and discriminative, to the sacred writings alone. And thus you will understand that *αἱ γραφαὶ* in those days formed just as special and distinguishing a title for the Old Testament, as the Bible or the Scriptures do now-a-days for the whole collection, embracing both the Old and the New Testament.—Mark xv. 28; John x. 35; Rom. iv. 3; Matt. xxi. 42; Acts xvii. 2; Rom. xv. 4; 2 Tim. iii. 16.

5. Corresponding to this remark, there is another, which if taken along with you, will form a complete preparation for the examination of the Christian Fathers, with a view to ascertain the degree of respect in which the writings of the New Testament were held by them. We find quotations often ushered in with the phrase, "As it is written." Now, looking to this in all its nakedness and generality, it might be a quotation from any or every author who can be named. But after it came to be generally used in quoting from the Sacred Volume, it is now the invariable symbol of a quotation from that volume, and from it only. Of this there are manifold examples both in the Old and New Testament. Let me give a few specimens from the latter —John vi. 31; Rom. iii. 10; 2 Cor. iv. 13.

6. We see then how the Old Testament was referred to by those who believed in its divinity—thus referred to by the Jews, for example, who ascribe this high character to the Old Testament, and to it only. Let us see if both the Old and New Testaments are referred to in the same manner by the Christian

Fathers—for if so, it will form a complete demonstration, that by them the same high character was ascribed to both. But previous to this let me remark, that before entering upon the examination of the Christian Fathers, we should first see whether there be not among the New Testament writings any references to each other. I have stated why it is that this was to be scarcely, if at all looked for, published as they were within a few years of each other, and previous to any very general recognition of them in the Christian world. This, however, has not prevented one undoubted reference, and a truly precious one it is —we mean that made by Peter to the epistles of Paul. I have said of Lardner, that if he wanted to exhibit his own argument in full strength, he should have begun with Peter and not with Barnabas. But, passing this, let us attend to what Peter says, (2 Pet. iii. 16.) Here one apostle defers to another, just as he would have done to the writings of the Old Testament, putting them on the same level, by affixing to them the same appropriate and distinctive appellation. There is, on every principle of sound criticism, a tenfold greater weight of authority in this verse for the divinity of Paul's epistles, than in all which Barnabas and Clement have left behind them. We shall not attempt however any exhibition in detail of the testimonies of the Fathers, but will devolve upon yourselves the examination of them as given in Lardner's Credibility, or as digested by Dr. Paley into a brief but comprehensive synopsis in his "Evidences of Christianity."

7. But it is not enough that these testimonies should be presented. They further require to be vindicated against a certain hostile impression, as prevalent and strong as it is utterly unreasonable—as if they were but the testimonies of Christian writers, and therefore, of an interested party, on whose deposition it behoves us to look with every feeling of suspicion and distrust. We have already attempted to dissipate a similar prejudice against the evidence of the scriptural as compared with that of the ex-scriptural authors; and we have succeeded, I trust, in demonstrating, on every sound and received principle of criticism, the real weight and superiority of the former. And we think it were not difficult to institute and complete a similar demonstration in favour of the Christian, as compared with either the heathen or the Jewish testimony.

8. One thing is obvious, that the Christian writer had nearer and most direct access to the original sources of information.

He, if only an upright, behoved to be the more enlightened and knowing evidence of the two—grounded on his better opportunities for the verification of those facts in which the religion of Jesus Christ is said to have taken its rise. There are five or six apostolic Fathers whose writings have come down to us, and who were cotemporary with the first witnesses; and these are succeeded by others along the course of descending history, with such a frequency and closeness, as to form a chain of testimony quite unexampled for any other passages in the history of ancient times. And as to the imputation of theirs being an interested testimony, the direct answer to this is, that unless all history be indeed a lie—unless the combination can be imagined of different and distant authors, of all sorts of prejudices and persuasions, including even those very heathens and Jews whose evidence is so much desiderated as being a disinterested testimony—then, by the universal and unquestioned concurrence of all writers, Christianity had to undergo the fiery ordeal of no less than three centuries of persecution, ere it obtained aught like permanent rest and toleration from the powers of this world. What possible account can be given for the endurance of these protracted sufferings—all incurred for adherence to the truth of Christianity, and all avoided and escaped from by a simple renunciation of the same. People talk of interest; but on what side did the interest lie? Had these tens of thousands of martyrs any conceivable inducement for the profession of their creed, apart from their conviction of its truth? Men might die for a falsehood, but would they die for what they believed to be a falsehood? They might, and they have died for a false opinion, because men might err in their opinions; but they would not die for a false statement of what they had seen with their own eyes, or heard with their own ears. Now this applies to the first generation of martyrs, who would be at all pains to accredit, and they could do it at first hand, the truth of those palpable, and, at the same time, miraculous events, on which the religion was based that they gave up their lives for; and the second generation would be at equal pains to make sure an incorrupt tradition, from the mouths of their predecessors, of the great and primary evidences for the truth of that religion which the potentates of this world had combined to destroy. To quote one example, as a type and representative of all the rest—would Paul have told the Corinthians of the miracles that had been wrought amongst them, and would they have tamely submitted to the impos-

ture, if imposture it really was, at the expense of ease and property and life, and all that was dear to nature? Or could their children, the next generation of the still subsisting Church at Corinth, have possibly fallen into a universal mistake about the identity of this said Epistle of Paul, which Clement tells them to take into their hands and read—an epistle preserved with care in their Church, and having the unexcepted and uncontrolled testimony of their own immediate fathers on its side? What better guarantees can possibly be conceived for a pure testimony, purified like the gold that is tried seven times by fire? And when one thinks of this, not as the single, but as the concurrent testimony of many churches and societies, widely scattered over different and distant parts of the world, yet all meeting in one general expression of confiding reverence for the books of the New Testament, and, of course, for the history contained in them —if this history, after all, is to be set aside as a thing of nought, then all history might well be given up as a fable, and that for the want of any possible medium by which the knowledge of past events can be transmitted to the men of succeeding ages.

9. But the more effectually to dissipate this illusion, grounded on the imagined superiority of a heathen to a Christian testimony, I have long been in the habit of fastening on some actual testimony of the sort that is so much confided in; and improving even upon it by successive additions to its credibility and force, have thereby been enabled to assign the sort of testimony it would at last land us in. For this purpose I have instanced the Roman historian Tacitus, who depones so expressly to the persecutions of the Christians in the reign of Nero, and tells us of the capital punishment which Jesus Christ suffered under the government of Pontius Pilate, in the country of Judea. He writes altogether like a man very generally and very slenderly informed in these matters; and we had no more right to expect that he should be particularly intelligent on the affairs of this new sect which had sprung up in Palestine, than we should expect any person of general literature in this city to be perfectly and fully acquainted with the concerns of the Quakers in America, or of the Methodists in England. But certainly it would have added to the weight of his testimony, had he been at pains to inform himself—had he, for example, travelled through the various Christian churches of his time, and made himself master of all their statements respecting the life and ministry of Christ, the ministry and miracles of the apostles, and, above all, the

overpowering attestations, had he only interested himself so far in the matter as to have collected and judged of them, in behalf of the resurrection of our Saviour. Conceive that he had done all this, and that in consequence of being satisfied of their truth, he had engrossed in a paragraph which he transmitted to posterity on this subject, that this Christ, as he himself by express inquiry had ascertained, worked miracles while He lived, and after having been put to death, rose from the grave, and ascended into heaven. Would this, think you, have made the testimony of Tacitus more available than it is at this moment for a demonstration of the truth of Christianity? Would it have been placed by these additions to it utterly beyond the reach of exception, so as to have left no room for the endless cavils of infidelity, and unappeasable scepticism? As it stands at present, it comes before us in the character of a plain history, by which one important fact at least is established—the heavy sufferings which Christians had to endure because of their religion. But how would his announcement of the Christian miracles have been received by the doubting and disputatious of the present day? Might they not have said, and said most plausibly—It is true we have the word of Tacitus for the reality of these miracles, but we have no more. Tacitus tells us of Christ as a miraculously gifted personage, but he remains a heathen notwithstanding. We have his sayings, but not his doings, on the side of Christianity. Truly he must have had no very sincere belief in these said credentials of a divine message—for, after all, he abides a pagan; or, in other words, refuses to accredit Jesus Christ as a Divine Messenger. He tells of His miracles, it is true, just as Livy tells of his prodigies, without any great faith, it is probable, in either the one or the other on the part of these historians; and therefore it is quite fair in us, to put the miracles recorded by the one, and the prodigies recorded by the other, on very much the same level.

10. Such must, such would have been said, had the testimony of Tacitus come down to us in this state; and I ask you to think in what possible way this defect could have been repaired, or what could Tacitus have done that would have removed this blemish and discredit from his testimony? It certainly affixes great discredit to any man's testimony, when the words of his mouth are contradicted and given the lie to by the actions of his life; and so, should Tacitus have told us that he had examined the narratives of the Christian miracles; that he had

conversed with the eye-witnesses of some of them; that he had seen several of those who saw Christ after His resurrection; that he in consequence transmitted them as facts, for the reception and belief of all his readers;—it would have affixed a serious flaw to his whole account of the matter—it would have greatly damaged his reputation for veracity and trustworthiness, if, after all, he had remained an idolater, and if not an enemy, at least not a disciple of the Christian religion. We again ask, how could this be remedied? and the obvious reply is—by the man's acts on the one hand, and his sayings on the other, being brought together into right keeping and harmony. Let him substantiate his credit by his conduct, and then should we have greater respect for both. If the resurrection of Christ be indeed an article of his historical faith, the best way of certifying this, were the submission of his understanding to the doctrine, and of his life to the law of Christ. It is true it was a serious thing to become a disciple in those days—to share in all the disgrace and danger, or to brave an exposure to all the losses, and the martyrdoms, and the many cruel sufferings then attached to the Christian name. But this is the very circumstance which made one's profession of the gospel so convincing and conclusive a proof of one's faith in the gospel. It was the best possible evidence which could be given of sincerity. Or, in other words, Tacitus, in all reason and common sense, should have best recommended himself to the confidence of his fellows by the act of becoming a Christian; and so testing the reality of his belief in the miracles that he had examined, by openly embracing the doctrines that had been proved by them. Well, suppose he had done so; and what would have been the consequence? Tacitus the Roman historian, would thus have been transmuted into Tacitus the Christian Father. He would have taken place in his own day, and come down to us in company with the Polycarps, and the Irenæuses, and the Justin Martyrs, and the Tertullians of Christian antiquity. But then should we have heard the people, whose delusion we are now combating, say, that it is now a Christian—or according to their view of it, now a suspicious and interested testimony, which is just tantamount to saying, that Tacitus, by doing that very thing which formed the most perfect demonstration of his honesty to the men of his own age, would therefore, and on that account, have come down with a shade of discredit to the eyes of posterity. That which most accredited his uprightness then, would have most tarnished

the character of his testimony now; and very strangest of all paradoxes in the history of human prejudice and feeling, the testimony of a heathen, which is regarded as so luminous and satisfactory, gathers upon it a certain soil of discredit, should the heathen, in the act of becoming a Christian, make patent to all men his readiness to suffer and to die for it.

11. You will now be reminded of a former delusion, akin to this, and which we have already combated, when comparing the historical value of Mark within the canon, and Mark without the canon; and from which, I trust, I made it perfectly obvious, that in the testimony of Mark there lay a greater weight of evidence than in the testimony of twenty Barnabases. And in like manner, when we now compare the historical value of Tacitus without the Church and Tacitus within the Church, we trust to have made it equally manifest, that in the single attestations of a Polycarp or a Justin Martyr, we have the evidence of more than twenty Tacituses. It is very well that we have the dim and distant echo, or reflection of his voice as a general historian on the affairs of the Roman empire—when, in that capacity, he tells us all that we could possibly expect on the subject of that new religion which had recently arisen, and was now forcing itself on the observation even of secular and political men. But while we give all welcome to their notices, let us not forget that broad and continuous pathway, all studded with luminaries of the first magnitude, and bringing down the events of the evangelical story, in a clear and open vista, such as we find nowhere else, when looking backward to any other scene or department in the past history of the world.

12. What we have now said of heathen is alike true of Jewish testimonies. We have, in fact, thousands of both sorts on the side of Christianity, for every testimony, written or unwritten, whether by authors, or by the members of the numerous churches formed in the days of the apostles—each of these, we say, is the testimony either of a Jew or of a heathen—not certainly, we mean, of either heathen or Jew after his conversion, but most unquestionably of either Jew or heathen at the time of his conversion. Had he remained unconverted, had he kept by his Judaism or his idolatry, we could certainly expect from him no testimony in favour of the Christian miracles, even though he had seen them, and so been convinced of their reality, but still withstood them so far, that he refused to embrace the faith of the gospel. And the only question which remains is, whether

the act of embracing that gospel by his becoming a convert throws any disparagement on his testimony?—now, of course, the testimony of a Christian. But the point to be settled is, whether, because a Christian, this testimony is the more to be confided in or the more to be distrusted. Strange indeed, that men are to be all the less believed the greater the proof is which they give of their sincerity; or that a Jew, affirming the miracles of the gospel, and remaining a Jew, should be looked upon as worthier of credit than a Jew affirming the miracles of the gospel, and becoming a disciple of the gospel in consequence. One cannot well understand how this rule of contraries should have insinuated itself into the argument before us; but it does look very inexplicable, that a testimony should be held worthy of all respect and entertainment if given by men who do not act upon it, but shall fall into suspicion or distrust on the moment that it is given by men who do act upon it, nay, are ready to die for it. But this is just the rule proceeded on by those who desiderate such heathen and Jewish testimonies as they do not have, and pass unheeded the thousand-fold better Christian testimonies which they do have—the testimonies of men who once were Jews or heathens, and who, in the act of becoming Christians, gave an incalculably greater weight than before to those testimonies, now passed through the ordeal of most cruel sufferings, and sealed by martyrdom. Yet in the face of this obvious and powerful consideration, will men forget the primitive Judaism and Paganism from which these testimonies have emerged, and because now Christian, will fasten the brand upon them of interested testimonies. Marvellous perversity, that the word of men at ease, and who refuse to forego one earthly interest for the truth, should outweigh the word of men who for its sake have renounced all; or that the voice of those at a distance from the scene should be caught up with so much eagerness, while the thousand voices lifted up in the very thick of the persecutions are all unregarded, even the language that fell from men who braved all for Christianity, whether as devoted saints, or as dying martyrs for its cause.

13. Yet, while we thus contend for the superior weight of the Christian testimonies, let us not undervalue those which have been bequeathed to us by the pens of Jewish and heathen writers. It is well that we have them such as they are, and they are precisely such as we should have expected from men scantily informed of Christianity, or obstinately prejudiced against it.

They are confirmatory, as far as they go; and we should certainly have been puzzled and at a loss to account for the absence of such testimonies, had we wanted them altogether; or to understand how it was that Christianity had attained the magnitude which we believe, on the authority of Christian writers, that it did attain in the course of half a century, and yet that neither heathen nor Jewish authors should have taken any notice of it. It may appear an odd illustration, but I think it a just and an effective one. Let us suppose that you met an acquaintance in a day of clear and full sunshine. With the ocular evidence that you had, you could have no possible doubt of his identity; but it would perplex you not a little if, while perfectly sure of himself, you could not make out that he cast any shadow on the ground, although all the other objects within the field of vision cast theirs. The presence of the shadow would not be felt as a thing at all needed to give any supplementary proof of the presence of the man. But still the want of the shadow would be a very puzzling affair; and it would have been just so, had there been a dead and universal silence on the subject of Christianity among all the Jewish and heathen writers of that period; and it is well that we are spared the trouble of solving such an enigma, had the enigma been really presented to us. Still the main positive evidence for the reality of the Christian miracles, lies in the direct statement of the Christians themselves, just as your main evidence for the reality of your friend lies in your direct perception of him. You would never think of strengthening, and far less of seeking for the first of these evidences, by looking down on the second of them, though certainly the want of the second would prove a very strange anomaly among the phenomena of vision. And it would have been a like strange anomaly among the phenomena of history, had we had no Jewish or heathen testimonies on the subject of the Christian religion, which arose in Judea during the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, and in a few years made itself known by its many thousands of proselytes, to the uttermost limits of the Roman empire. Still the great strength of the credentials through which we know of and believe in Christianity, lies in the direct force and current of the Christian testimonies; and there is a preference of the shadow to the substance on the part of those who, instead of listening to their voice, feel themselves more charmed, as it were, into the repose of conviction, as if there lay a greater power of historic faith in the dim and

distant echoes, whether of Jewish or heathen writers. Such is the estimate in which I hold their testimonies; not as my informers, but as a faint and feeble and very partial reflection of the informations I had previously gotten at first-hand. I am truly thankful, however, that we have them, for it saves me from a great perplexity—just such a perplexity as I should have felt if, while thoroughly satisfied that a friend had entered my room, I should miss his image where it ought to be in the mirror on the wall, and so puzzled myself to ascertain, if I could, the very singular mishap that had come over the looking-glass.

14. It is well that we have no such puzzle in looking back on the records of that period. There is enough of testimony from the mouths, both of heathens and Jews, to save us from this; and the interesting thing therefore to ascertain is, what that is which they do testify, and what is the value of it. We could not, as we have already said, expect much, if any, of *bona fide* statement at their hands on the side of the Christian miracles; and I hope I have already said enough to show, that had they done so, while at the same time they kept by their ancient faiths, it would have been no improvement on the testimony, such as we now have it, and probably rather a deterioration. And you will not forget, I hope, what that is which would have brought the testimony from this state of deterioration, and presented it to us in its most unexceptionable form—just the exchange of their old for the new faith, in which case it would have come down to us in the character of a Christian testimony, and therefore only swelled the glorious assemblage of those faultless and first-rate testimonies which we have already in our possession. But if they do not tell us of the miracles, what is it they do tell us? Their far most important telling is, that while they do not speak of the miracles themselves, they speak most decisively and abundantly of the persecutions which those underwent who did speak of the miracles, and linked with the conviction of their reality, that faith and that hope for which they renounced all and suffered all. We do not hear from them of the Christian miracles; but we hear from them of the Christian persecutions, those best and most satisfying vouchers for the truth of the miracles. It is true we hear of these persecutions also from the Christian writers; and on every principle of historical evidence, the information of these last is not only fuller, but ought to be greatly more authoritative and convincing; and we feel quite sure that a historian, with no view whatever to

the deistical controversy, or to the support of either side of it, but merely for the purpose of giving an accurate representation of the events of the period, would draw more largely and with greater assurance on this subject from the accounts of Justin Martyr and Tertullian, than from Tacitus, or Pliny, or Porphyry, or Celsus. It is well, however, that these have bequeathed to us the intimations they have done; and that on the stepping-stone of their unexcepted testimonies to the Christian persecutions, we learn that the testimonies, given not by them but by others, by the disciples and martyrs of a persecuted faith to the Christian miracles, was indeed unexceptionable.

15. But whatever value we might annex to Jewish and heathen testimonies for what they do say, they may well be held of incalculably higher value for what they do not say. They have transmitted to us no contradiction, and far less any refutation, of the Christian miracles. Nay, some of their most noted adversaries to the faith, as Celsus, have admitted the truth of these miracles, and evaded their force by ascribing them to magic. They allow them as facts, but they have invented a theory for themselves, by which to ward off the impression of them as vouchers for the truth of the gospel. We cannot imagine a more diametric opposition than there is on this subject between the spirit of the ancient and that of the modern infidelity. In ancient times facts went for nothing, or were easily overlaid by hypotheses; and so in the present instance, the historical truth of the Christian miracles could not be denied—but as proofs for the Christian revelation, they were set aside on the hypothesis of witchcraft. In modern times, again, men profess to be the worshippers of experience; and while all mere hypotheses are the objects of distrust, there is no one hypothesis perhaps in this our philosophic and enlightened day, that would be more the object of distrust, or rather of violent distaste and nausea, than the hypothesis of witchcraft. Let us decide then between the infidelity of the older and the later periods, selecting that which the one was best qualified to judge of and did allow, and rejecting that which the other was best qualified to judge of and did condemn. Discriminating thus between the two parties, we should accept of the judgment of Celsus and his contemporaries rather than of those who lived nearly two thousand years after them, on the question of the facts which took place so much nearer to their own age; and we should certainly lean more to the judgment of the moderns, in regard to the principle into

which the facts might be resolved. And so we cannot but side with the ancient infidels, as to the historical truth of the miraculous events which took place in the days of Christ and His apostles—while on the other hand, we cannot but side with the modern infidels in regarding the hypothesis of sorcery or witchcraft as we should the follies of any antiquated superstition. Taking the one with the other, we are shut up to the conclusion, that these miracles were actually performed; and brushing aside all the visions of demonology, we must view them as the credentials of a message from Him who sits in high command over all the powers and processes of nature, and was pleased on that occasion visibly to interpose and overrule them, for the fulfilment of His own counsels, for the objects of a wise and righteous administration.

16. But the admission of Celsus is repeated by few of them. Generally speaking, the miracles are passed over in silence; and I call upon you to estimate the vast importance of this fact in a pleading for the truth of Christianity. Is it not clear as day, that miracles said to have been performed, and that in books spread out before the world a few years after the dates which were assigned to them—and performed where? in the streets of Jerusalem, in the villages of Judea, on the highways of the land, and at the time when they were crowded by wondering and inquisitive multitudes—and not only so, but miracles submitted to the question—first, in the councils of Judea, and then before the Roman governors, Pilate, whose acts we know were transmitted to Rome, and Herod, and Agrippa, and Festus, and Felix, and others—is it for a moment to be believed that these miracles, as the healing of the most palpable diseases and infirmities, and the restoration of the dead to life, could not, if indeed so many juggleries, have been detected, and held forth as such to the derision of the world? There were the most ample materials, and the most ample opportunities for a withering exposure of the fraud—if fraud and imposture it really was: and surely there was no want of good-will to it on the part of these relentless and exasperated adversaries. Had it been a conspiracy of falsehood on the part of the apostles, they could most easily have blown it up; and they would most certainly have blown it up if they could. We can understand that these miracles should be true, and yet that Jews and heathens still persevering in their obstinate rejection of Christianity, should hold their tongues about them. But there is no understanding of this deep and unbroken reserve of

theirs, on the supposition that the miracles were false. We have already explained how their affirmative testimony in favour of the Christian miracles, while they remained unbelievers in the truth of the gospel, would have been of no great value. But they have done the greatest possible service which, in their capacity whether as Jews or heathens, they could have rendered to our cause, by the effective testimony of their silence.

CHAPTER V.

SOME REMARKS ON THE EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY.

1. I HAVE now said all that I can afford on the subject of the historical evidence, in as far as it authenticates those events which are known by the name of miracles—we mean the miracles of power. Prophecies, with their fulfilments, form another species of miracles—the miracles of knowledge. And now that we are fresh from the consideration of the Fathers, let us observe as to the manner in which they conducted the Christian argument both with heathens and Jews—as a peculiarity of theirs altogether worthy of being noted—that they laid more stress on the argument from prophecy than they did on the argument from direct miracles; or, in other words, while the evidence of miracles is of far more prominent consideration with us, who live at the distance of nearly two millenniums from the performance of them, it was less set by, or at least far less used as a weapon of vindication by those advocates for the gospel who lived at the distance of but two centuries—their favourite instrument, whether for the purpose of defence or aggression, being the evidence of prophecy. This might have admitted of easy explanation, if Jews had been the only infidels whom the Christian Fathers had to deal with. But they also adopted the same treatment of the subject in the argumentations which they held with Gentiles—as Tertullian, for example, in the Apology addressed by him to one of the Roman emperors; and other examples could be mentioned, proving that they drew more largely upon the prophecies in those days than they did upon the miracles, or that the former stood them in greater stead when engaged in fighting the battles of the faith.

2. This, you will at once observe, does not in the least affect the force or weight of their testimonies to the reality of miracles, viewed as historical events. For this we have the most express and numerous depositions from earliest times; and what is most valuable, we have their ascriptions of unbounded confidence, verified by quotations and references of all sorts, in those narratives which give the most ample record of the miracles in question, and those apostolic epistles which at once re-echo and proceed upon their truth—the two together forming the original documents on which our Christianity is grounded, and appealed to in all the numerous churches that had sprung or were springing up everywhere, as sacred oracles of equal and co-ordinate authority with the Scriptures of the Mosaic dispensation.

3. The thing, then, with which at present we have properly to do, is not that the miracles of the gospel were rejected or even slighted by the Christian Fathers as vouchers for the truth of Christianity, but that they were less strenuously and less frequently insisted on than some of the other evidences for the faith. And, first, we have to remark that this peculiarity was not confined to them; for, in tracing the matter upward, we shall meet with undoubted vestiges of the very same habit within the limits of the New Testament. Not that the miracles were deemed insufficient, even of themselves, to substantiate the Divine mission of our Saviour, as we may gather from the testimony of Nicodemus, from the recorded dialogues of the Jews, and, above all, from the remonstrances of the great Author and Finisher of our faith, when He appealed to His works, and said that unless He had done these, they had not had sin (John xv. 24). But still we find that, in point of impression, miracles did not always tell so powerfully on the convictions of the men who witnessed them, as certain other evidences which seem to have come into more powerful coalescence with the habitudes of their understandings. They had methods of their own, in fact, by which to explain away the miracles—ascribing them to Beelzebub; and to countervail this did Jesus Christ interpose another evidence, on the failure or misgiving of the first one—the evidence of His doctrine, as opposed to the whole spirit and policy of him who was the prince of devils, and the great adversary of the human race. We read even of disciples, who must have seen the miracles, falling away; because they held this evidence to have been overborne by the counter-evidence which lay in the hardness of His sayings—while, on the other hand, we read of

some who believed because of what they had heard, and of others who bore Him testimony that surely never man spake like this man. We greatly mistake the matter if we think that miracles were the only, nay, perhaps that they were even the chief instruments of conversion in those days. We on one occasion read, that though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him. And on another occasion, that many believed because of His own word—saying, that we believe because we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. It is not true that miracles were the only, we are not even sure that they were the chief, credentials of His mission. He appeals Himself to other evidences besides—once, for example, to the perfection of His own character,—"Which of you convinceth me of sin? and if I say the truth, (and if free from sin, I cannot say otherwise,) why do ye not believe me?" Nay, after the most stupendous of all miracles—that of His own resurrection—when He fell in with His disciples, instead of dwelling on the incontestable evidence which His very presence amongst them afforded to the truth of His Messiahship, he was at pains to lay before them the evidence of their own Jewish Scriptures; and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them the things concerning Himself. But let us look also to the practice of the apostles; and this will furnish a nearer and more applicable comparison with the practice of their successors, the Christian and Apostolic Fathers who came after them. Look to their incessant appeal to the Old Testament, in their reasonings on the things of the kingdom of God. True, they worked miracles, and one of their prime vocations was that of witnesses to the resurrection of the Saviour. Yet, after all, mark the stress which they laid on the witness borne to Him by the prophets and righteous men of old —as in the very first of their recorded sermons by Peter, and at a time, too, when the most wonderful manifestation of miraculous power was going on. Then it is that he speaks of the testimony given by Joel; and quotes David, as foretelling that Christ who had been put to death should come alive again. Again, in his next address, does he draw even more upon the prophets, upon Moses and Samuel, who had told before of these days, than upon the miracles which he had just performed in the sight of all the people. The book of Acts is full of examples of this sort. When Peter and John were again examined of the deed done to the impotent man, and by what means he was made whole—in

pointing to the Saviour as the cause of this miracle, they could not refrain from an appeal, at the same time, to the prophecy of the stone set at nought by the builders, and which had become head of the corner. And when Stephen was brought before the Sanhedrim, immediately after he had done great miracles and wonders among the people, his defence lay, not in making reference to these, but in a lengthened argumentation based on the Old Testament history, and which he selected as a pathway of conveyance for the gospel to the understandings of those who heard him. And, coming down to Philip, we read that his miracles were thrown away on Simon Magus, while his exposition of a prophecy was what told on the man of Ethiopia. Even on the first conversion of a Gentile, Peter, who was employed upon that occasion, while the main burden of his argument rested on the events which ushered in the new dispensation, did not omit to say that to Jesus Christ gave all the prophets witness. And, in like manner, Paul, while he bare ample witness to the resurrection of the Saviour, and worked many miracles in the eyes of his countrymen, based many an argument on the olden history of the Jews, and on the voices of the prophets read amongst them every Sabbath-day, and on the promise made to the fathers, and on the sure mercies of David. Even when he turned away from them to the Gentiles, he adduced a warrant for the step from their own Scriptures—that God had so commanded them, saying, "I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, and that thou shouldst be for salvation to the ends of the earth." He did not satisfy himself with lifting his own testimony to the resurrection, even though he had miracles and wonders to show, as the vouchers of his high and heavenly commission; but he reasoned this with them out of the Scripture—opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered and risen from the dead. And he commended those disciples who, not content with his own word, searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so. And we read of Apollos, not that he was mighty in miracles, but mighty in the Scriptures—so as mightily to convince the Jews, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. It is thus that incessant appeals were made by the preachers of the apostolic period to the Bible of the Jews, and more especially to the prophecies of that Bible, for the purpose of accrediting Christianity, amid all the profusion of those miracles which were wrought in its behalf; and this whether to confirm its friends, or to silence and gain over its enemies. When contending for

the faith, they set it forth as the hope of the fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets, and saying none other things, even when testifying of the resurrection, than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come, "that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first to rise from the dead;" insomuch that Paul felt, when pleading the cause before kings and governors, as if his most conclusive appeal was, "Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." And finally, when this said Paul assembled his countrymen at Rome, and he endeavoured to gain them over to the faith of the gospel, it was not by the exhibition of miracles, but by expounding and testifying of the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning to evening.

4. All these instances are taken from the direct history; and though in the Epistles, as we have often told you, there are repeated appeals made to the miracles, yet there, too, we have indications of the same habit of reasoning from the Old Testament—as the lengthened argument of Paul to the Romans, in a great measure based on the doctrine and prophecy of the Hebrew Scripture; and to give but one example more, as in the Second Epistle of Peter, who, after he had stated the miracle of the transfiguration, and the voice from heaven, points his hearers to the more sure word of prophecy—which, whether it means that which was taught in Scripture, or that which was foretold, was a distinct appeal to another evidence than that of miracles—an evidence for which they were to give earnest heed to the thing uttered in old times by the holy men of God. Miracles were often worked in those days, but, in the language of Paul, they often turned out a sign to them which believed not, and which, therefore, aggravated their condemnation; like the men of Capernaum, who did not repent although mighty works were done before their eyes. But prophecy, the word of doctrine, however, rather than the word of prescience, was the great instrument of conversion, a sign to them that believed.

5. Now, if even in the very age of miracles this style of argumentation was so much indulged in, we could not surely expect it in less proportion or degree in those subsequent ages when miracles had gone by. There are many distinct references, as you have already seen, to these miracles in the writings of the Fathers; but let us not wonder if the references to prophecy should have predominated over them. It should naturally have

been the most effectual argument with the Jews, the descendants of those men who had withstood the sight of miracles, and whose children would all the more readily withstand the record of them, but who might not resist the testimony of their own sacred oracles —more especially after the dreadful confirmation they had since received in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the total dispersion of the people of Israel. And then, in reasoning with the Gentiles, who made such ready evasion from the miracles of the gospel, by alleging them to have had their rise in demonology, and by likening them to their own prodigies—nothing could be more natural than, even in their hearing, to make mention of those undoubted miracles, the evidence of which was so palpably before their eyes—we mean the miracles of knowledge, for the establishment of which they had to appeal to those writings of undoubted antiquity, in which the prophecies were found; and then to the fulfilment of that history which was known and read of all men—thus connecting their religion, not with the devices and the sorceries of inferior spirits, but with the administration and will of that God whose prescience reached all futurity, and whose overruling providence determined all things.*

6. Having thus explained the preference of the Christian Fathers for the argument from prophecy to the argument from miracles, let us now, having expounded the latter argument as much as we had time for it, satisfy ourselves with a very few observations on prophecy, as constituting part of the evidence for the truth of the Christian religion.

7. But let me first remark on what indeed is indispensable to any argument upon the subject, and that is the evidence we have for the distant priority of the prophecies to their corresponding events, or the far anterior date of the former to the latter, so as to place the various fulfilments, without all question, beyond the reach of human foresight. And here, we may remark, how, for the establishment of this essential preliminary condition—how very much we owe to the existence of that deadly misunderstanding which took place between the Jews

* A greater stress laid in the New Testament on prophecy than on miracles. The former argument more genial to the predilections of the Jews, and less liable to evasion. For similar reasons, the same peculiarity might be observed in the writings of the Christian Fathers, who appealed far more to prophecy than to miracles as the vouchers of their faith. —Luke xxiv. 27; Acts ii. 16, 21, 25, 34; iii. 22-25; iv. 11; vii.; viii. 30, 35; x. 43; Eph. ii. 20; Heb. i. 1, 10.

and the Christians. Had there been no such misunderstanding, had the Jews to a man become the converts and disciples of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the proof for the early existence of the Hebrew Scriptures might have lain open to suspicions and cavils, from which, as the case stands, they must be wholly exempted. Nothing can be more perfect than the evidence afforded by the agreement of those two great dissentient parties —exasperated to the uttermost against each other—in their common reverence for the books of the Old Testament, which, for their antiquity and genuineness, are the objects of one and the same historic faith to the Christians on the one hand, and the children of Israel on the other. On the occasion of that great split which took place between them some eighteen hundred years ago, these two great and distinct bodies parted company, but each with the same Bible as far as the Old Testament is concerned; and certain it is that there has been no concert or collusion between them ever since; and our canon is just their canon, made up of the same list that we are presented with by Josephus, and almost every book accredited by New Testament writers as of heavenly and Divine origin; and regarded on both sides as anterior, by several centuries, to the ushering in of the Christian dispensation. We can imagine nothing more satisfactory, nor aught in the history of erudition that more sensibly demonstrates the safe transmission of ancient records through successive generations, than a comparison between the copies of the Hebrew Scriptures as propagated downwards, through two distinct channels so wholly separate from and independent of each other as the Jewish and the Christian. In things sacred there was between these two societies no communication whatever; and those writings which were held in equal demand and veneration by both had leave to multiply, with no other guarantees for their integrity on either side than the natural law by which, speaking in the general, each man who works for his employers feels an interest in doing his part with tolerable accuracy, or in doing it tolerably well. The copyists and translators of books, with a view to their sale, and for the purpose of meeting the demand of customers, are at least as much under the operation of this law as any others employed in the preparation of marketable articles. And what, after the lapse of nearly two thousand years, do we actually find, on the comparison of the Christian with the Jewish copies?—each exposed in their progress from age to age to such random accidents, as must

ever tend to widen the two great families of manuscripts from each other. And yet let critics tell how marvellously they agree, so as to present us in substance with the same doctrine and the same history; and so as to be, to all intents and purposes, the same book in the hands of the men of these two religions, who, at mortal variance in everything else, harmonize only in this. I cannot imagine a stronger experimental demonstration of the security wherewith, on the whole, we might count upon the safe and right transmission of the deeds and documents of other days; and this feeling is greatly enhanced when one reads the account of the discovery of the Samaritan Pentateuch. The divergency of the one people from the other took place many centuries before the Christian era—that is, when the ten tribes revolted from the dominion of Rehoboam, and took the Pentateuch along with them, rejecting all the other and more recent books of the Old Testament, but transmitting their own Scriptures for themselves. And if in other and ordinary matters, least of all in this, we may be sure that the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. And what is the result in this case also? With the exception of one, or at most two very material variations, and which may be well accounted for, they have one and the same Pentateuch; and when one thinks of the Samaritan in particular—lost sight of for more than a thousand years since the days of the Christian Fathers by whom it is quoted, but afterwards recovered, and that chiefly through copies presented to Archbishop Usher through our ambassador at Constantinople—we cannot but look on the phenomenon of a book, passing down, on the whole uncorrupted, through a series of centuries, amounting to nearly three thousand years, without regarding it as one the most fitted of any we know to raise our confidence in history, and make it palpable that there is a solid and continuous pathway, by which its information may descend in safety to the men of succeeding ages.

8. Taking up, then, the antiquity of the Jewish Scriptures as a sure point of departure; and though I have not mentioned what must have been felt at the outset of Christianity as the most undeniable of its proofs known and read of all men, the Septuagint version of the Old Testament—let it be my first advice to you when entering on the study of prophecy, to begin with the Bible itself, from which you may single out those predictions which are of the most direct and literal and unambigu-

ous description, and then to compare them with their fulfilments, if already fulfilled—whether you have learned of these fulfilments from bygone history, or read them in the present state of different countries and people—whether in the accounts of travellers or on the field of immediate observation, and of which therefore you can learn and judge from your own eyes. Of these I may state as a specimen, and it forms one of the most striking as it is one of the earliest examples, the prophecy of Moses towards the end of Deuteronomy, on the dispersion of the Jews among all nations, and which, though delivered three thousand years ago, sets before us a most graphic representation of the actual state of this singular people—through whom we may be said to have a twofold evidence, first, in the prophecy that foretold their doom, and secondly, in the Providence that fulfils it. For recollect, they form the select and solitary example of a whole nation, maintaining its identity and oneness as a people, I had almost said as a family, though scattered into fragments, and blown like particles of dust to the four corners of the earth. I cannot stop to contemplate any longer this monument of older revelations, but must hasten to particularize a few more of those plain and undeniable prophecies, many of them fulfilled at such brief intervals that we have both the prophecy and its accomplishment laid before us in Scripture. Others again, where not only an event but a state is predicted, and so presenting us with the manifest accomplishments of prophecy now before our eyes. We have examples of this in the kingdom of Egypt—in the ruins of Babylon and Tyre and Edom—in the subsisting condition and habits of the descendants of Ishmael—in the fortunes of Judea, and more especially of Jerusalem, as trodden under foot of an infidel power. As you prosecute the study, you will find what at the outset might not be so palpable, brightening into greater clearness and certainty as you become more intelligent and practised in the exercise which I now recommend to you. After being satisfied with such examples as I have now given, you will not turn away as unworthy of your regard from such a prophecy as that of Noah, when he pronounces sentence of degradation through Ham upon Africa, and tells of Japhet dwelling in the tents of Shem, so manifestly accordant with history, not only in the conquests and repeated invasions of Asia from Europe, as by the arms of Alexander, but in the occupancy to this day of the vast domains of India by the people of our own distant West. But without digging into what you may at

first regard as the more doubtful and obscure of prophecy, though afterwards, like the ulterior stages of a science, you will find the way clearing up before you the further you proceed in it, let me fasten your attention at the beginning on the more broad and palpable fulfilments. For this purpose, I have long been in the habit of recommending as the book you should read next to the Bible passages I have now specified, Dr. Keith on Prophecy. The wise procedure—whether you want to possess your own mind with the argument, or to combat the infidelity of others—is to begin with the more unquestionable instances; and even though you should go no further, you will find enough to decide the general question of the truth, both of the Jewish and Christian revelations. This is the great point to be carried. But let me at the same time apprize you, that if you do go further, you will meet with a far richer mine of evidence than you are at all aware of, and which cannot well be explored without gathering from it a more profound and intimate acquaintance with the scheme of salvation, and such views of a presiding intelligence in the affairs of the world, as should at once confirm your faith and deepen your piety.

9. In the progressive study, then, of this great subject, I would recommend as the next object of your attention, those predictions which relate more immediately to the Saviour; for as we are told in the Book of Revelation, the testimony of Jesus is the great spirit and main design of prophecy. In the collection of these, beginning with the prophecy uttered to Adam before his departure from paradise, you will meet with various degrees of clearness and obscurity—some of them having the most specific and unequivocal application to Jesus of Nazareth, and others less obvious it may be at first, but as the fruit of your greater practice and proficiency in this department of sacred learning, growing in your convictions the longer you persevere in the survey and comparison of Scripture with Scripture.

10. In this walk of investigation you will soon come to be satisfied that the whole ritual of Moses is but the prefiguration, and so a prophecy, of the great sacrifice that was to be made for the sins of the world. You will thus be familiarized with prophecy in action and in symbol, as well as prophecy in language or articulate utterance. You will thus be made to perceive, as Horsley, and others of like firm and high intellect with himself, and who repudiated at the outset of their studies the notion of hidden or mystical significations veiled under the literalities of

Scripture—I say, that with them you will at length be forced by overpowering evidence to admit, that there are types and allegories in the Old Testament standing related to their antitypes in the New, as the shadow is to the substance. Nay, there are set before us not only typical ordinances, but typical events and typical personages. It is thus that our Hebrew Scriptures are far more instinct with the whole spirit and doctrine of our latter dispensation, than appears on the surface, or than would strike many a reader even after his repeated perusal of these sacred writings of the Jews. Not only is the evangelical Isaiah full of Christ, but in the Psalms of David, perhaps in the larger number of them, a greater than David is there. We are quite sensible that the work of spiritualizing may be carried to a degree altogether extravagant and fanciful; yet we promise you many a precious discovery of Christ, hid, it may be, as he was for a while from the disciples with whom He companied to Emmaus, but at length disclosed to you as He was to them, after that, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.

11. We forbear repeating the attestations we have elsewhere given in behalf of what are called double prophecies. But let me, while warning you against the danger of giving way to unbridled imagination on the subject of unfulfilled prophecies, let me also bid you be fully aware, that the study of these latter is not only a legitimate, but a positively required study. Notwithstanding all the obscurity which attaches to the Book of Revelation, it is ushered in by the solemn sanction of—"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein, for the time is at hand." It is our part to be studious of the declaration in the Word, and observant also of the events in the world. We should be at least on the outlook; and we shall find at length that events will occur which shall clear up and be counterparts to the declarations. The prophecies will find a convincing interpretation in their fulfilments; and thus it is that we have a glorious and increasing evidence in reserve for the truth of Christianity. No one can read even this most enigmatical of all the inspired books, and compare it with events, under the guidance of an able commentator, without being impressed by a strong general accordance between the great outline of the prophecy and the history of our species since the commencement of the Christian era.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE MORAL AND EXPERIMENTAL EVIDENCES FOR THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. We trust that elsewhere we have made it palpable enough that, in order to be rightly operated upon by evidence, it is not necessary that we should previously consider either the nature or the rationale of its operation. The direct is anterior to the reflex process; and the former may have been well exemplified for ages, may have been accomplished with perfect soundness and facility by thousands of healthy and vigorous intellects, before it was ever taken cognizance of or ever passed under survey of the latter. The process is first exemplified and executed, and it is by an after survey that at length it comes to be described: and thus it is that the mind of man had been in the habit of advancing from its proofs to its convictions, from the premises to the conclusion of many an argument, and by a pathway of strictest logic, long before logic was ever heard of, or it had ever occurred to any to assign the law and philosophy of evidence, or the laws and processes of the human understanding.

2. It would greatly serve to prepare you, not for being rightly operated upon by evidence, but, which is truly a different thing, for rightly understanding the method of its operation—did you make just distinction between the power required for the discernment of a truth, and the power required for its discovery. There might be ten thousand minds capable of discerning what only one of the whole number was capable of discovering. Nay, what is more, there might not be one individual of our species who could have made the discovery of what, after that discovery is made from some quarter foreign to the species, might not only be read but recognised of all men. In the former case, or when man is the discoverer, there is the homage ascribed to him of a sagacity or a genius which signalizes him above all his fellows; in the latter case, or when the discovery breaks in upon the world from some other quarter, it is referred to a superhuman origin—to a mind of higher order, possessed of faculties and powers transcendently above the reach and beyond the compass of the unaided faculties of man.

3. And it might make no difference, whether the truth in question was at one time in the possession of mankind, but afterwards lost and obliterated in the process of their degeneracy

from the light which they originally enjoyed, or whether it be altogether new to the species. Either to discover what before had been altogether unheard of within the limits of the human family, or to recover what was originally known, but had at length been extinguished and is forgotten, might be an achievement utterly beyond the faculties of any man upon earth, and the revelation of which might require the letting in upon our world of a light and an intelligence from above. But what we affirm is, that the need of such a discovery from without of a given truth, and that owing to the want of power in man, does not necessarily imply the want of power from within for the discernment of such truth, when once it is set before us. A proposition which we could never have found our way to, we may nevertheless recognise as worthy of all credit and all acceptation, when stated and placed forward to our view. We have no light in ourselves which could lead to the disclosure of it; but when disclosed *ab extra*, there may be a light in ourselves by which to invest it in the characters of truth, and so to constrain the homage of our deep-felt convictions—not that light of evidence which could open up for us a pathway to the objective, but a light of evidence struck out between the objective and the subjective—requiring therefore the presentation of the object by another, after which it is acknowledged and appropriated by ourselves as an article of faith. Yet it is not, we contend, a faith without reason, but with a reason, which though only stated and explained by few, may be felt, and most legitimately felt, by many: insomuch that the doctrine thus perceived, and thus admitted into their creed, may take its place amongst the clearest and most confident of all their reckonings. It may be difficult to make this manifest without the illustration of specific examples: but we cannot afford a wide range of illustration, and will therefore confine ourselves to the direct explanation of the moral and experimental evidence, as being sufficient to exemplify what we have now stated in an abstract and general form.

4. The moral system of the gospel was that which the world had to recover, not to find anew and for the first time. It was obliterated only, for it had not always been a stranger to the hearts and consciences of men. Still its reappearance on earth might require as much of supernatural power as if earth had never before been visited by its footsteps. To recall it before the eyes or within the bosoms of that species from whom it had departed, might call for as great a miracle as if it had to be placed

originally there. For its second, as well as its first visit, it might need a bidding from the upper sanctuary. The reconstruction or new construction of the moral, might require the immediate hand of God, as well as the new creation of the heart within which it was to be established. The moral system had possibly to be born again, or born from above, as much as man himself had to be thus born; and the same transcendental power, the same inspiring or regenerating power, that was needful for the one achievement, may have been needful for the other also. And yet on the objective presentation of a pure and righteous morality coming to us from without, there might be a light from within to recognise and to do it homage—not such a light, we repeat, as could have guided man to the construction of a right ethical system at the first, but such a light as could enable him to discern its perfection, when once set before him by the hand of another, or suspended to his view from the firmament of heaven. There might be much in the history, both of individuals and of the species, that might stifle and overbear the moral sense, and so as to make it powerless for the object of discovery, yet not powerless for the object of discernment, were once the discovery ready made to our hands. Both the licentious and the vindictive passions of our nature—the contests between one nation and another—the selfishness, the pride, even the patriotism inspired by the generous devotion of the heart to kindred and to country—these may have so distorted and bedimmed the moral vision, that the great lessons of universal justice and charity may have been lost sight of in the world, and the pure system of righteousness have become a thing forgotten and unknown. Yet the light within, although thus shaded and obscured, nay mantled over, and shrouded in a darkness which no force of illumination in ourselves could possibly have dispersed or dissipated—the light of conscience, although thus stifled and thus overborne, is not therefore extinguished, so as not to be relumed again by a touch from without—as, for instance, by the exhibition of a pure and perfect model or exemplar of righteousness, which one might look to and study, and before which he might awaken not to a blind but to a just and enlightened admiration. For let it well be observed, that at the time of such a calm and leisurely contemplation, the darkening and disturbing influences, by which hitherto the moral light in the soul had been habitually overborne, are for a time suspended and kept in abeyance; when therefore a pure scheme

of virtue presented to us from without, might find a counterpart and an accurate reflection, and so a consenting testimony in the innermost recesses of our moral nature. You will thus see, that it might be essential for the representation of the pure moral system to be given *ab extra;* and yet when given, that it may evoke a right and responding testimony from the recesses of the conscience, now that the spectacle is set before it of perfect virtue, whether as expounded didactically, or as exemplified in a living character. And so the canonized virtues of antiquity, the revenge, the contracted patriotism, the lordly contempt of other nations which signalized the Jews still more than it did any of the Gentiles; and on the other hand, its tolerated vices, its licentiousness, its domestic tyranny, its manifold local aberrations from humanity and justice and truth—such as the thefts of Sparta, and the gladiatorships of Rome, and the infanticides of India, and the cruel abandonment of parents both there and in other countries—these, when once the pure moral system of the gospel is placed before their eyes, and seen in conjunction with them, come to be altogether superseded in the estimation of men thus set on the exercise of their reflective faculties; and the palm of superiority is universally awarded by all such to the humility and the diffusive benevolence not circumscribed by the limits of neighbourhood or country, and the patience under provocation, and the unweariedness in well-doing, and the scrupulous undeviating rectitude, and the exalted purity both of life and sentiment, and the devoted piety, and all the other virtues, whether saintly or social, which shine forth in the Christianity of the New Testament.*

5. Now it is such a product, such a phenomenon as the appearance of this New Testament at the time it did, and in the land of Judea, that requires to be explained. It is the unlikelihood that its system of pure and universal morality; its ethical code so expansive, so unfettered by aught of the local or the temporary, so obviously fitted to be a directory, not for this one or that other nation, but for the species at large, dealing with men as men the possessors of an immortal spirit, and adopting all its precepts and provisions to the general state and attributes of humanity: and then such precepts, where love

*Difference between the faculties of discovery and discernment, so that many truths and principles which could not have been found out might be recognised as just when presented. It is thus that prophets might have rightfully gained the confidence of men on the first hearing.—Matt. vii. 28, 29: John iv. 41, 42; vii. 45, 46; x. 14-16; Acts vi. 10.

sits enthroned in golden supremacy, but a love in conjunction with unspotted holiness; so that the licentious, as well as the malignant passions, are laid under process of severest crucifixion, and this in order to the formation of a character at once graced by all the sanctities, as well as all the charities of highest virtue —we say the unlikelihood of such a system having had an earthly origin, or that the light of so great a moral resplendency should of itself have arisen from among the midst of Jewish prejudices; and where the truth of a purer and better doctrine had long been buried under a load of traditions and the accumulated follies of many generations—why all this points to the conclusion that it was a light from on high which had visited them—a day-spring from heaven that shone upon a people sitting in the region and shadow of death (Matt. iv. 16). This conclusion is greatly strengthened when we look to the immediate agents of a disclosure so bright and so beautiful—the son of a carpenter at the head of a few fishermen from Galilee, with such a lack of opportunities or education, that even the people themselves could put forth the question—Whence hath this man such knowledge, having never learned? It has really all the characteristics of a great miracle; not a deed or miracle of power; not the divination of another's thoughts, which might be called a miracle of discernment; not a prophecy or miracle of knowledge, but the revelation of a pure and perfect ethical system, so utterly beyond the reach or penetration of those by whom it was promulgated, that it might well be termed a miracle of doctrine, or a miracle of sentiment—a system which we judge to be of God, because we judge it beyond the power of man to have devised or have discovered it, yet the excellence of which, after it had been unfolded and placed before our view, might be recognised and read of all men.

6. And the miracle is the same, whether the virtue thus set forth be exhibited didactically, or in a tablet of rules or moral aphorisms, or be exhibited descriptively, as embodied in the character and deeds of a living personage. Now, in the New Testament we are presented with it in both these forms, the abstract and the concrete—the latter of which we should hold to be the far more difficult achievement of the two, and that whether exemplified in a real, or but portrayed in a fictitious history—in which last case we should so far agree with Rousseau, that we should deem the inventor to be at least as miraculous as the hero. It is precisely thus that the character of

Jesus Christ becomes an argument for the divinity of the religion which He taught. And we doubt not that many a simple holder of the Bible, and who knows but little more, as he reads of Him who went about doing good continually, has a deep and intimate and well-grounded feeling of the very sentiment which Rousseau gives vent to, when he says, that if Socrates lived and died like a philosopher, Jesus Christ lived and died like a God.

7. But if it be competent for a man thus to recognise the signatures of a Divine character in Him who wore the form of humanity, and has been set forth to the world as God manifest in the flesh, why may he not be able to recognise a God as speaking to him in the Scriptures, who, though unseen and unembodied, might yet announce Himself in the Bible—just as, not the style only, but the spirit, not the literary alone, but the moral qualities of an author might appear in the book that he has written? If there be enough of light in the conscience to tell what is supreme rectitude, we are not to wonder if there should be enough of light in the understanding for enabling us to interpret—nay, even to identify when presentation of them is made to us, the characteristics of the supreme God. It is by a single step that we remount from the feeling of a conscience within the breast, to an intelligent faith in Him who is greater than the conscience, and knoweth all things; and why may we not, by a single step, make ascent from the felt lessons of this conscience to an intelligent view of Him, who, through this organ of the inner man, makes known the intimations of His will, and so of His character, to the children of men? It is thus that a peasant may, in the act of reading his Bible, feel, and most legitimately feel, on the strength of the intimations given there, that he is holding converse with God. A majesty, and a moral greatness, and a voice of commanding authority, such as no man ever uttered, and which immediately evinces itself to be a voice from the sanctuary on high—these, if felt, though never to be adequately described, might be the satisfying, and not the satisfying only, but valid and sufficient vouchers for the divinity of Him who has thus imprinted the traces and manifestations of Himself in the pages of His own inspiration. We do not need to wait for the description of this evidence ere it shall become operative—for whether it shall be ever or not described philosophically, operative it is, and will be efficiently and practically. Nor is its description in the least necessary for its taking effect on him who is the subject of it.

But though we do not need to wait for the description of it, that is no reason why we should either look on the description of it as a thing impracticable, or, if executed successfully, that we should turn away from it, as a thing of nought. It is most satisfactory to know of any given belief, that it is accordant both with the laws of evidence and with the laws and processes of the human understanding, and that we should be able to say, whether we have come to it by the immediate suggestion of a first principle, or by derivative process and as the conclusion of an argument. There is a disposition, we fear, among the mystics of a certain school, to set aside all this, and that on the strength of a certain principle, or, we should rather suspect, of a certain nomenclature of their own. We most readily concede to them that there is evidence which tells most efficaciously, and withal most rightly, on the mind, and that long anterior to any reflex view having been taken of it, or to its ever having been made the subject of a philosophy at all. But, on the other hand, we should most certainly invite the attention of those who are most profound in the analysis of the human spirit, and encourage to the uttermost their philosophical treatment of this said evidence; nor can we think it wrong that we should require some account of it at their hands. The apostle asked his disciples to give a reason of their hope; nor would I be startled by the question being put in another form, and I were asked to give a reason of my faith. If this faith be a conviction that springs up in the immediate light of a first principle, let me be told so; and if so told to my own satisfaction, that to me will be a satisfactory reason for it. But I have no idea that this is a topic not to be meddled with, or of being put off with the bare allegation that it is a matter of faith, and therefore reason has nothing to do with it. At this rate we should have as many mental instincts as we have of those beliefs or perceptions to which, in the countless diversity of the objects of human thought, the mind of man is found to be competent. I feel persuaded that by such an unsettling of the old foundations, both the judgments of common sense and the informations of Scripture may come to be alike overborne, and that a neology of another form, of a more mystic and ethereal character than its predecessor, might still practise the same wanton freedom with the literalities of the Bible, and overlay the Word of God by a wayward and presumptuous rationalism of its own.*

* The evidence of a spoken communication may be transferred with full power to a

8. We know not in how far a revelation of the Spirit of God finds a place in the reasoning, I ought perhaps rather to say in the reveries of the men of this school. I believe that there is such a revelation in every instance of conversion to the saving faith of the Gospel; first, for the plain reason that I read of it in Scripture; and secondly, because I know of its subjection and actual operation, whether from my own experience, or from my observation of it in others, it is unnecessary to say. And still I can see no reason why, if this is what we find, this is not also what we might philosophize upon. If a mental phenomenon at all, it surely might be stated, and if it bear aught of likeness or relationship to other phenomena, the place it holds among these might surely be assigned for it. And my reason for adverting to the Spirit under the head of the moral evidence is, that with this evidence I conceive the Spirit has to do. Indeed, I am not aware that the witness of the Spirit is ever distinct from the vivid representation of some one or other of the internal evidences of Scripture. I do not understand that it is by any audible, or any direct visible intimation from Himself, that He makes known to us the truth of the things whereof we read in the Word of God. We look immediately to the things, and in the things themselves are we made to see their own truthfulness. It might be illustrated thus:—in looking to a sensible object, there may be certain microscopic lineaments or features thereupon too minute for the discernment of our unaided eyesight. Let it but be imagined of this eyesight, that it is made tenfold more powerful and perspicacious than before—on this simple change there will start into visibility a microcosm before hidden from observation, but now standing forth most obviously and conspicuously before us. Conceive this done by miracle—then it is both true that what I now see has been revealed to me by an extraordinary manifestation; and yet that I believe in its reality on what to me is the first-rate evidence of ocular demonstration, or the evidence of the senses. The man who has been made the subject of such a transformation can say, and say most warrantably, Whereas I was blind, now I see. Our explanation of the process does not make him see in the least better, and his confidence is just as solid and well-grounded a one without the explanation as with it. But still it is an explanation which might tell beneficially on other men, and dispose them to look

written communication, and so as to make the Bible the announcer of its own credentials. —Luke xvi. 31; 2 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. iv. 12; Rom. x. 17; John viii. 43; Ps. cxix. 105.

respectfully and with attention, on a subject which has been often made the jeer of infidelity—though capable of being so illustrated and so set forth, as if not to restrain a Felix from denouncing the pretension as mad, at least to extort from the candour of many an Agrippa the acknowledgment that these are the words of truth and soberness, nay, by the blessing of God, to lead him who is almost, to be altogether persuaded to become a Christian.

9. For what is true of material might be as true of mental vision; as, for example, of the beholding of the things contained in the book of God. Grant but an increased power of discernment, and things not seen before may evolve into manifestation—and the manifestation, it may be, of such characters of majesty and moral worth, as might force the conviction that God is verily in the Bible of a truth. Such a veil as is on the heart of the Jews in the reading of the Old Testament, might obstruct and hide the truth from their eyes—a truth which may come at length to be disclosed at their conversion, when the veil is taken away. This will be the doing, it is expressly said, of the Spirit of the Lord, who by the simple removal of a film from the eye of the mind, might unfold to us the Scriptures, in all the glory of those evidences which bespeak their origin from on high. The resulting belief is all the more sure from the way in which it is effected—from the fulfilment of a promise which the Bible itself holds out, and which is thus made good to the experience of the inquirer, even the promise of the Spirit to those who ask Him. When the manifestation at length comes, as the result of earnest reading and earnest prayer, its coming so gives him all the greater confidence of its being a light from heaven; and he places full reliance on the sureness of the word, when, after a course of heedful and prayerful attention thereto, he finds the day to dawn and the day-star to arise in his heart.*

10. You are quite prepared, I trust, to admit that there is a certain force of sentiment, which even a peasant might most legitimately feel, and under which he is impelled, and that by a sense of its rightful and moral obligation, to read his Bible. It is not that at the outset he believes his Bible: he has not yet gotten to the proofs of its veracity. He has gotten no farther

* The Spirit worketh in us faith by evidence—an evidence which becomes manifest to them whose eyes are opened to behold the things contained in the book of God's law, and who have the veil taken from their hearts.—Ps. cxix. 18; 2 Cor. iii. 13, 15; 2 Pet. i. 19; Eph. ii 8; John xvi. 14, 15; Eph. v. 14.

than what is called in law the precognition of it—yet such a precognition it may be, that, however slight and transient, makes it his imperative duty, if not to take its statements into his creed, at least to take them into his earnest consideration. The Bible has so much of verisimilitude as, even on the first glance we bestow upon it, should constrain and perpetuate our attention to it, as being altogether worthy of a further hearing or further examination. This is an obligation which might be brought as clearly and powerfully home to the conscience of the unlearned, as of the highly educated reader; and thus it is that, by dint of the lessons given under the parental roof, or of the appeals made Sabbath after Sabbath from the pulpit, such an influence might be brought to bear on every household and every neighbourhood, as should fill every country that enjoys these opportunities, if not with confirmed disciples, at least with diligent and anxious inquirers after the truth as it is in Jesus.

11. It is by tracing the mental history of one of these, that both the moral and experimental evidence of Christianity might be illustrated. To meet the one there is a moral sense or conscience alike vigorous in all classes, and requiring no scholarship to aid its perceptions of right and wrong. To meet the other there is a consciousness, a faculty alike universal among men; and in virtue of which the most unlettered workman might be just as sensible of his own thoughts, and of certain characteristics of his own nature, as the most profound and accomplished philosopher. We admit that the one may have acquired a certain metaphysical power of self-scrutiny and inspection, of which the other is incapable, and in virtue of which, too, he may be enabled to describe the process which the other can only feel; yet, along which both might be alike safely and well conducted by the right footsteps to the same right and sure conclusion. It is true that, for the fulfilment of this process, the inner man must be perpetually awake, for it is mainly on the strength of its recognitions, that the truth and divinity of the Christian message come to be recognised. The unlearned, in the apostles' days, who said, Verily God must be in them of a truth, for they know all that is in our hearts, must have had the consciousness of what was in their hearts, or they could not have said so. But this was not the consciousness of those faint and shadowy lineaments on the tablet of the inner man, which might require for their discovery and delineation a power of mental analysis that is possessed only by few, but of certain broader and more dis-

cernible characters which had been made to stand forth in palpable manifestation there; and which, when thus evoked, are alike patent to every man's conscience—may be recognised and read of all men.

12. We have already, when entering on the subject of the moral evidence, made distinction between the discovery of a truth, to which only one man perhaps of the whole species, or even no man, but only a superhuman being, is alone competent—and the discernment of the same truth, which, when once it is announced, might lie within the compass of the faculties of all men. In the moral evidence that faculty is conscience, which may not have enough of light for enabling us to form a right ethical system, but light enough for an admiring recognition of its excellence, after it has been framed and set forth by the hand of another. In the experimental evidence, the faculty brought into play is that of consciousness, that, on the one hand, might be so far asleep as to be insensible of many things, which, though lying on its own field, might nevertheless escape its observation, and yet be so far awake as to become sensible of those things, on the moment that utterance is made of them. We hold this to be a very common phenomenon; nor do we look on the explanation of its rationale as at all impossible.

13. As a proof of many things lying dormant in the mind, yet to the consciousness of which we can be awakened by a voice from without, let me bid you think how many the days of your life that is past, whereof you have altogether lost the remembrance; and not only of the days themselves, but of all that has happened in them. Nay, I am confident that, confining the retrospect only to the last year, many are the days of it, the history of which, and all the events of which, have clean gone from your memories, and never again to re-appear or present themselves, at least during the remainder of your lives in this world. And yet I will venture to affirm, that there is not one of these days on which a something did not happen, which would be recalled to your memory, did some of your acquaintances but make mention of it. It never would come to your recollection spontaneously, or by any effort of your own; but what you never could have minded yourself, you might be reminded of by another. So that while to you it is an altogether lost and forgotten thing, it might be fully restored by an informer from without, and that you will observe, not because of the faith you put in his veracity, not because of the evidence which lies in

his testimony, but because of the evidence which lies in your own felt and conscious recollection, now awakened by an external voice, from what would else have been an unbroken and perpetual slumber. And it is thus that not only may his statements of fact, however forgotten, be adopted by you, but, what may be regarded as still more extraordinary, his statements of truth and principle, however unheard of before, though perfect novelties, and uttered to you at least for the first time in your lives, may also be adopted by you with all confidence; and that not because of any deference to his authority, but because, seen by yourselves in the light of their own reasonableness, they at once obtain the sanction of your judgment. The remarkable thing of these statements is, that they should be altogether new, and yet that you should be so ripe and ready with an instant and intelligent approbation of them. Let a shrewd observer of our nature come forth in authorship with his just remarks on life and character; and, however original, they will be met by the shrewd discernment of many a reader, and on the moment acquiesced in, though never before presented to his notice. The mystery here is not what the light is in which these novelties have been discovered by the author, but what the light is in which they are discerned by the reader. How comes he to have such an instant perception of their truth and justness? A whole page or chapter may be lighted up by perfect novelties of sentiment and remark; and yet novelties though they be, the reader does need to peruse and to inquire and to cast about for evidence, in order to carry his own acquiescence in the propositions which the author sets before him. It seems as if the very utterance of the propositions raised up that medium of light in the mind of him who heard them, by which their own truth might be apprehended. Somehow or other, the wisdom of the author finds its way, as if by instant flashes of manifestation into the mind of his readers, who award to him the homage of being the most shrewd and intelligent of all observers.

14. The only way in which this remarkable but undoubted phenomenon seems capable of explanation, is by that law of mind which has been termed the associating principle. The sentiment, or the descriptive and experimental truth might be altogether new; and yet on the instant of being heard, may command the instant assent of our judgment, not from any deference to the authority of him who uttered it, but because associated, as it may be, with the facts and the findings of our own

personal observation, it might by this very process in the constitution of the mind—we mean the process of suggestion—bring these forth to one's own notice and recollection, and thus awaken a whole host of sleeping witnesses, as it were, each of which may confirm, or be an independent voucher within, for the perfect justness and accuracy of that which has been spoken from without, or presented to the eyes of the reader, when engaged in the perusal of some book, which places the lessons of moral and experimental wisdom before him. It is thus that the manifestation of the truth might be made, and that at once, to a man's own consciousness, even of things spoken for the first time, and never before adverted to.

15. And it is precisely thus that the Bible, when brought into converse with the human spirit, may by means of the consciousness which it awakens there, manifest the truth of its own averments, to him who sits intently over its pages. A man may never once have thought of the deep and entire ungodliness of his nature—when perhaps some such expression as that of being without God in the world, might open his eyes to the retrospect of his own life, and might compel him to acknowledge that, in the history of himself, he beholds an accurate reflection of the humanity that is pictured in the Bible. This is but one of those descriptive traits in which it abounds, and which meet us everywhere—in the confessions of its psalmists, or in the denunciations of its prophets, or in the direct charges and reasonings of its apostles, and all of which might open the fountains of memory and consciousness within, and so bring home to one's own bosom the humbling conviction of—"Thou art the man." It is thus that with no other apparatus than a Bible and a conscience, a light may be struck out between them. A man might be awakened thereby into a thorough conviction of sin, while at the same time, he cannot but recognise of the book which has so effectually taught the lesson to him, that it is a wise discerner both of the things in his history, and of the thoughts and intents in his heart.*

16. But this is only one great lesson. The process does not stop here. The man, under, it may be, the agonies of remorse

* A man may, in the reading of his Bible, meet with such averments as, on the strength of his conscience and consciousness together, shall effectually convince him of sin. This is the first stage of the experimental evidence.—Ps. xix. 12; l. 21; li. 3; liii. 2; lv. 19 Jer. xvii. 9; Eccles. vii. 20; John xvi. 8; Rom. iii. 23; Acts xxiv. 25; 1 John i. 8; Eph. iv. 22.

and the fears of vengeance, casts about for more of the informations which are to be found in this volume, and more especially if he is made to understand that it is not only a messenger to tell him of his sin, but to tell him also of salvation. At this stage of the inquiry, you will perceive how the consciousness and the conscience are both in play—the one to tell him of God's law, the other to tell him of his own immeasurable distance and deficiency therefrom. The testimony of the word is re-echoed by the inward sense of the reader, and we are not to wonder if the attention which he gave to it at the first should henceforth be still more riveted on its communications; or that he should continue in daily and habitual converse with the informer whose statements have already awakened so powerful an interest in his bosom. It is when thus occupied that another great lesson might come into view, and he be at length conducted from the doctrine of human guilt to the doctrine of the propitiation that has been made for it. He may be led to perceive the exquisite skill wherewith this expedient for the salvation of a sinner harmonizes all the attributes of the Godhead, and without indignity to the Lawgiver, secures the full indemnity of those who have trampled under foot the authority of His government. An expedient so fitted to allay all the misgivings of conscience under the terrors of the divine justice, might well bespeak to his mind the wisdom of Him who devised it; and in its precious adaptation to his moral and spiritual exigencies, he might as readily conclude for a God as being the author of the Word, as, in the adaptations of external nature to his physical wants, he concludes for a God as being the author of the world. This is our second example of an accordancy between the tablet of an outward revelation, and the tablet of our own moral nature. More could be given; and you can well imagine them so manifold and various as to yield the same profusion of evidence for a divine author of Scripture, as for a divine author and former of the universe.*

17. But the crowning and conclusive argument lies in the revelation of these things by the Spirit of God. His revelation *of these things*, we say, for it is by a light shining upon these, and not by the light of any more direct manifestation, that the

* The doctrine of the atonement and of an imputed rlghteousness carry in them the experimental evidence of an accordance between what man feels that he needs and the provision made for it and freely offered to him in the gospel.—Isa. liii. 5, 6, 8, 10-12; Jer. xxiii. 6; Matt. xx. 28; John i. 29; Acts xiii. 39; Rom. iii. 22, 24, 26; x. 3, 4; 2 Cor. v. 21; Gal. ii. 16; Phil. iii. 9: 1 John iv. 10; Rev. i. 5, 6.

truth of these things is evolved upon our understandings. He makes the thing to be proved clear to us by making the proof itself clear. He does not supersede the argument that we have just given, for it is by that argument that He brings us to the conclusion of the Scriptures being Divine. When the converts in the apostles' days were made to exclaim, These men know all the things which are in our hearts; and, Verily God is in them of a truth—they made use of the very argument which we have been trying to propound. This was the argument which convinced them of the Divine mission of the apostles; and yet, also, it was the Spirit of God who convinced them, not without the argument, but by the argument. He made them see or understand the things which the apostles said, just as at this very hour He opens the eyes of inquiring suppliants to behold the things which apostles have written, fulfilling on them the prayer of the psalmist—Open thou mine eyes to behold the wondrous things contained in the book of Thy law; or removing the veil which lies on the tablet of the outward revelation—that veil which we are told intercepts the discernment of the unbelieving Jews in their reading of the Old Testament. But the Spirit does more than this for us. He further opens our eyes to behold the things which are in our hearts. He makes known ourselves to us. He gives a perspicaciousness beyond that of nature or its faculties, to the eye of consciousness, to what Dr. Thomas Brown calls the faculty of internal observation, and thus enables us to discern many of the characters before hidden from the view which lie graven on the tablet of the inner man. The argument lies in the accordancy of these two tablets, insomuch that the one is an accurate representation or reflection of the other; and the man who is now made to look intelligently upon both, can say—The Bible tells us all that is in our hearts, our now felt moral disease, of which that book, and it alone, gives an adequate description, and for which that book, and it alone, proposes an adequate remedy—an appliance which, of all others, is the one exactly suited to the now felt exigencies of our state, the now felt wants and desires of our nature. But although the Spirit should make use of this argument, and no other, the whole strength of the resulting conviction is not to be measured by the strength of the argument alone and viewed in itself. The conviction, we say, is mightily strengthened further by the very way in which we are put in possession of the argument, by the sight that we have gotten of the materials out of which it is

framed, insomuch that we can now say, in answer to prayer it may be, Whereas I was once blind, I now see. For had we got at the sight of these two tablets—that is, of the Bible on the one hand, and of our own moral nature on the other—had we been conscious of getting at it by the exercise of our natural faculties alone, and just in the way that we get at the better understanding of any other book, or by the help of the mental philosophy at a better acquaintance with ourselves—there might have been room for the apprehension, that no doubt we had come to the discernment of a marvellous accordance between these objective Scriptures on the one hand, and our own subjective nature on the other; but still it might have been thought not so marvellous, that what we had thus been able to discern, others, the highly gifted of our species, might have been able to discover; and hence still, for aught we know, the human origin of Christianity. It puts a conclusive end to this last remainder of scepticism, if the discernment be come at in a way different from the ordinary way by which I come at the discernment either of any other subject or any other book—if conscious neither of the logic nor of the metaphysical observation by which I arrived at it—if not the result of any lesson taught at universities, but a lesson gotten at the school of conscience, and given to the deeply exercised spirit, when labouring in darkness and under a sense of a guilt, after peace with God—given, too, in a way which accords with the Bible's own promise—that he who seeketh findeth, and with what it expressly tells of the way of the Spirit—that no man knoweth whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. The very fact and finding on a man's own personal history of a translation thus brought about from darkness to the marvellous light of the gospel—this of itself is enough to constitute a most overpowering evidence for the divinity of this gospel, and to account for the phenomenon of the conversion which has resulted therefrom.

CHAPTER VII.

GENERAL REVIEW OF A PREVIOUS WORK ON THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. I MUST now bring these few sketches on the evidences of Christianity to a close, partly because the great bulk of my preparations both on natural theology and the evidences of Chris-

tianity have been transferred from the chair to the press. With regard to my two volumes on the Evidences,* let me take the opportunity of correcting a misconception of them which I find to be greatly more prevalent than I could have wished. It is now thirty-two years ago, or in 1812, that I published a little work on the Evidences of Christianity, which went through a great many editions, and wherewith, I believe, the theological public are familiar enough. But now, about seven years ago, I made that work the basis of another three times larger than itself on the same subject, and with the same title, and which, instead of giving forth in a separate form, I placed in the general series of all my works, and thus a very prevalent notion that this is but the republication of the original treatise, so that the views there given, and for which I have the greatest value, are finding their way more slowly to general observation than they might otherwise have done, saving, to be sure, when my kind friends, Dr. Buckland of Oxford, and Mr. Babbage, and that very accomplished theologian Dr. Pye Smith, have the goodness to patronize them, and give them at least this compliment, that they believe them to be well founded, or able to stand on the ground of their own merits, for they bring them forward in their own naked abstractness—that is, minus the name of the person with whom they originated. But as these are not the only instances, I hope to stand excused if I present you with a very brief synopsis of the new matter contained in the third and fourth volumes of my series.* They are chiefly taken up with such views and considerations as are scarcely if at all expatiated upon by other writers; and as they would not have been given unless I had happened to have some value for them, I trust to be excused if I devote one chapter to some account of what they are.

2. In the first chapter of my first book—on the cognizance which the understanding takes of its own processes—I labour to demonstrate that, with or without that cognizance, the processes might go on rightly; and that thus the human mind might be conducted to sound and logical conclusions on all sorts of subjects, without ever having studied either the logic or the metaphysics or the mental physiology of those trains along which the intellect proceeds, when it passes onward from the consideration of the proofs or credentials which belong to any given topic to the ultimate conviction into which it settles down regarding it.

* Now forming Vol. VI. of the "Select Works."—*Ed.*

I estimate very highly the distinction which I try to establish between the direct and the reflex operations of the judgment—and that chiefly because of the thousands and tens of thousands who never attempt the latter exercise, yet do acquit themselves most vigorously and justly of the former; and for which reason I am fully satisfied, that the grounds of the popular belief in the truth of Christianity, whether these have been expounded or not by the learned in theology, do nevertheless compose a valid foundation and warrant for the faith, and supply a reason for the hope that is in them to that multitude of unlettered, it may be, yet soundly-thinking disciples, who form, in great bulk and body, the family of believers throughout the parishes of Christendom.

3. Our next abstract and preliminary topic is man's instinctive faith in the constancy of nature—in the study of which I should like you to master the distinction between the outset disposition of the mind to count on the uniformity of nature's sequences, and that experimental faith which grows up among the after-findings of observation, and makes one surer every day of the same result in the same assemblage of visible circumstances. It is when thus employed that you will find the germ of that reasoning which we have brought to bear on the sophistry of Hume, when he offers to demonstrate the incompetency of human testimony to accredit a miracle. I shall attempt at present no repetition of this argument, but would direct your attention to the manner in which I endeavour to prove that, by the concurrence of certain inanimate witnesses, the truth even of the most stupendous miracles might be firmly and mathematically established.

4. I should also like that, after having studied our refutation of Hume, you would ponder well the observation of Laplace, on the accordancy which obtains between the instinctive convictions of the multitude, in matters of greater or less probability, and the calculations of men of science. This is exemplified not only in the judgments which they pass on the credibility of ordinary events, but also of those extraordinary events called miracles; and it forms one of the best specimens of our favourite distinction between the direct and the reflex in the processes of the human intellect. Altogether, it is fitted to inspire a higher as well as a juster respect for the popular understanding, and may well prepare us to expect, that there are evidences for the truth as it is in Jesus which tell immediately in the work of conversion,

and which may not yet have been set forth in the full and philosophic exhibition of their principles to the world.

5. After having finished what may be called these prefatory and general views, we enter, at the commencement of the second book, on the consideration of the principles of historical evidence —a subject on which a vast deal yet remains to be said; and the full and orderly exposition of which is still a desideratum in literature. My chief object is to expose the effects of a certain influence which haunts, and I think is apt to paralyze, the mind in its investigation of the historical evidence for the truth of Christianity. It is well to be aware of this, lest the argument should suffer an injustice in our hands, so that our impression of its weight shall fall greatly short of the real substance and power of it. I cannot too often reiterate that we invite and would be satisfied with the very same treatment of the documentary evidence for the facts of the evangelical narrative that is bestowed on all other history, and that on the principles of our received and ordinary criticism. The defenders of Christianity have failed in not holding out a more bold and decided front to their adversaries.

6. Passing over the two next chapters, which treat of the more ordinary parts of the Christian argument, I would like if I could succeed in fastening your attention on the fourth and fifth chapters of the second book, where I attempt to expose two delusions, distinct in themselves, but derived from a common origin—each of them depending on the imagination—that the parties under trial must necessarily be the objects of greater suspicion than the parties called in to give a testimony regarding them—just as in a court of justice you would defer more to the statement of the witnesses in the box than to the statement of the party at the bar. Under the influence of this conception or feeling, there is a strong predisposition to listen more and depend more on the evidence of an ex-scriptural than on that of a scriptural author; and I have therefore attempted to make it manifest, that on every principle of sound and right estimation, this judgment ought to be reversed; and have stated the grounds on which I hold that the historical evidence to be gathered from within the Bible is of greater inherent weight, and ought therefore to be of greater actual power and efficacy, than the argument which is gathered from the contemporary and subsequent writers, who are placed without the limits of the scriptural record.

7. And, as being quite akin to this, I have transferred the same principle to the comparison, in point of value, between a

Jewish or heathen and a Christian writer. I must say that I lay a great stress on each of these distinct considerations, which first occurred to me in the original treatise of thirty-two years back, and which I have since dwelt upon and illustrated at greater length in my recent and more expanded treatise on the Evidences of Christianity. I could wish that you pondered well each of these views, as I feel confident that they would conduct you to a much higher appreciation of the real worth and value of the Christian argument than is commonly made by the general run either of readers or writers on the Deistical controversy.

8. After this there follows what has long been a favourite topic—the due exposition of which would, I think, place the Christian argument on a high vantage-ground when confronted with the reigning principles of scientific men; and more especially of those who glory in having discarded the gratuitous imaginations of the schoolmen, and set themselves forth as the worshippers of experience. If there be one idea rather than another in which I feel myself more disposed to luxuriate, it is in the strictly Baconian character of the historical evidence for the truth of Christianity, and on the perfect accordance which obtains between the spirit of him who in philosophy would take his lesson from observation, and of him who in theology would take his lesson from Scripture—the one in every subject of merely human knowledge, putting the question of What findest thou? and the other in every subject of divine knowledge, putting the question of What readest thou? I am aware of nothing that I could more gladly seize upon, or so yield *con amore* as a favourite weapon, whether of aggression or defence, than the alliance of principle which obtains between a sound philosophy and a sound faith. There is nothing which gives me the feeling of greater solidity in our religion than the undoubted truth of what has often been affirmed respecting it—that it is a religion of facts as opposed to a religion of fancies—resting on history, and not on hypothesis—based at the outset on the evidence of observation, by men who first saw and then became witnesses to the miracles of the gospel, and thence conveyed to us by a pathway of manifold and unexceptionable testimonies, or by an evidence still, if not of an original, at least of a derivative observation. Give me the truly inductive spirit to which modern science stands indebted both for the solidity of her foundation and for the wondrous elevation of her superstructure, and this, when transferred to the study of things sacred, and consistently

proceeded on, would infallibly lead, in the investigation, first of the credentials, and then of the contents of revelation, to the firmer establishment of a Bible Christianity in the mind of every inquirer.

9. After this succeed a few slight remarks on the argument from prophecy, which I only notice because I have entered so little upon this subject throughout the lessons of my present course, and must therefore commit it to your own private studies. I would also notice the succeeding chapter for the same reason, as its topic I have not been able to enter on at all—we mean the connexion between the truth of a miracle and the truth of the doctrine in support of which it is performed—a nice and important question, and of which various solutions have been given by different theologians. I invite your attention to it, that you may see how the question can be so managed as to harmonize the respective claims both of natural and revealed theology, and that by a treatment altogether free from the charge of reasoning in a circle.

10. We pass over the next chapter, on the consistency of Scripture with itself and with cotemporary authorship, as both Lardner and Paley make so full a presentation of the materials of this argument; after which succeed the chapters on the moral and experimental evidence, which I would have you particularly to read, as I can but afford now to touch upon it with the utmost brevity in the chair. Of all the evidence that can be adduced for the truth of Christianity, it is that for which I have the greatest value—both from its being the only evidence which tells on the consciences and understandings of the great mass of the people, and also, I think, that evidence which is the main instrument of conversion, or for working in the minds of your hearers that faith which is unto salvation. And, for this purpose, I trust you already perceive that it is not necessary for you to expound this evidence from the pulpit, in the way in which I hold it incumbent on me to expound it from the chair. This may be the right place for the description of what I should call the subjective process; but the task which you have to perform, as the ministers of congregations and parishes, is wholly of a different kind—not to describe the subjective process, but to present those objective truths which executively and in effect will set that process working in the minds of those to whom you address yourselves. In other words, your great work is simply to preach the gospel, and leave its doctrines, its calls, its warn-

ings, and persuasions, as you find them in the Bible, and thence hold them forth to the view of the people, to work their own appropriate and direct influence on the popular mind, which will thereby be brought into contact, not only with the subject-matter of the truth as it is in Jesus, but also with the reasons for the truth of it. A light is thus evolved or struck out, if I may so speak, from the contact of God's Bible with man's conscience. It may be my business to give the reflex and philosophical exposition of this mental process here; but it is not your business to give it there. Your proper work, I repeat, is to preach and present the word, or bring it into juxtaposition with the minds of your hearers—when, by the blessing of God, this word will do its proper work in the manifestation of itself to the consciences of men. We will give ourselves wholly, say the apostles, to the ministry of the word and to prayer. But to minister the word is a very different employment from that of explaining the philosophy of its operation—just as different, indeed, as prayer is; and yet both the preaching and the praying, with the respective efficacy of each, are fit subjects for philosophical explanation. It might be attempted here, however preposterous and misplaced would be such an attempt from the pulpit. At most, however, I have only been able to give a very condensed or synoptical view of the argument, and should therefore like that you would read these two chapters, along with the other works that I have recommended on the internal evidence for the truth of Christianity. The chapter which follows—on the portable character of the evidence for Christianity—has been severely remarked on by critics as wholly incongruous and out of place in an argument which should have been wholly intellectual, without any mixture of the practical and the economic. It may be so. But I confess an irresistible temptation to enter on a walk which has been little explored—I mean the rationale of a missionary operation, as connected with and grounded on the self-evidencing power of the Bible. And the subject is not the less inviting, that it subserves the vindication both of a home and a foreign missionary enterprise, so as alike to philosophize the two great works of our day—that of extending the Church at our own doors, and that of carrying the message of salvation over the whole earth, and preaching the gospel to every creature under heaven.

11. Let me, also, for such reasons as those already given, devolve on your own private studies all the topics which occupy

the fourth and last book of my work upon the Evidences. The first chapter treats of the canon of Scripture, where you will observe, that, true to the principle which I have already advocated in your hearing, even the superior authority of a scriptural to an ex-scriptural writer, I have sought within the Bible itself for the chief evidences of the canonicity of the various books in the Old Testament, instead of resting, as many have done, the whole burden of the proof on the testimony of authors out of the Bible. I had great pleasure in tracing the references downward from the Pentateuch throughout the whole of the Hebrew Scriptures, till we came to the most signal and conclusive demonstration of the sacred respect in which the whole are held, which we gather from the quotations and from the manner in which they are spoken of by Christ and His apostles. I honestly believe that, by such a process for the establishment of the canon, you lay a hundred-fold firmer basis on which to rest the divinity of the Hebrew Scriptures, than can possibly be constructed from all the materials of all the other testimony and erudition which have been brought to bear upon this question. The canonicity of the New Testament rests, we admit, on a different foundation—on the general consent of the primitive churches, and the numerous attestations which can be gathered from the most esteemed Christian Fathers of the three first centuries.

12. Let me next entreat your special attention to the views I have brought forward on the inspiration of Scripture. I have only to offer one caution, lest on this subject you should be misled into a form of expression, which some of pure and orthodox sentiment might not perhaps be altogether prepared for. I contend for the optimism of the Bible, which is really tantamount to contending for its plenary inspiration. Only I will not affirm positively, in how far the inspired men wrote at all times under a supernatural influence; or in how far they were left, each to the idiomatic cast and peculiarity of his own genius. That they were so left in some degree, or that the inspiring force from above did not overbear them all into one style and manner of expression, is evident from the characteristic varieties which obtain between the different writers—as between Paul and John, for example, where the difference is as palpable as between Thucydides and Xenophon. Still, however, though this may affect the question of the *modus operandi*, it does not in the least affect the question of the *opus operatum* as being altoge-

ther perfect, unerring, infallible. This is to all intents and purposes an advocacy for plenary inspiration; but lest you should be misunderstood, when you affirm the possibility of the authors being left, in some degree, to their own characteristic and constitutional idiosyncrasy of style and manner, do not omit to say that it is only a question in how far God, the author of this Bible and of every word in it, chooses to avail Himself of the ordinary, and how far of the extraordinary influences—all of which are at His own perfect command and disposal, and that therefore however this question be determined, or if not determined at all, because indeterminable, still the whole Bible is θεόπνευστος, and the θεοπνεύστια is as complete, for the object of producing an absolutely perfect and altogether immaculate Bible, as if it had been carried the length of overbearing all the human peculiarities of temperament and habit and genius, by which the different writers both of the Old and New Testaments are so obviously characterized.

13. The last topic to which I would direct your attention, is one that I have scarcely more than germinated in my third chapter, where I treat of the internal evidence as a criterion for the canon and inspiration of Scripture. I say only germinated, for I think this a subject capable of being developed or expanded into many most important, and still unheard-of applications—so important that I at one time meditated the appropriation of a whole week in our session to a fuller exposition of our views. But this I cannot afford, and must now proceed *instanter* to the more advanced parts of our course.

CHAPTER VIII.

GENERAL APPLICATION OF OUR VIEWS ON THE EVIDENCES OF NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.

1. The most solid foundation for a natural theology we hold to be the manifestation of God unto the conscience—of which manifestation, however, we will not affirm that the great truth revealed by it is seen by us in the light of a first principle, or in virtue of what some would term the intuitive sense of a Divinity within use. We rather think that the felt supremacy of conscience is the first object of notice, or that which we take

the first and immediate hold of; and that by the rapid inference of but one step, there is promptly and powerfully suggested the idea, and not the idea only, but the conviction of a God. The sense of a master faculty in the soul, and which is throned there as the arbiter of right and wrong, conducts us from the feeling of a law in the heart, to the faith of a Judge and a Lawgiver who placed it there—of whose existence we read in the felt reality of conscience, and in the lessons of which conscience, we also read of His character and will. We cannot, therefore, with any confidence dogmatize it as an article of ours, that there is such a thing as an innate belief of Deity—thinking as we do that it accords better with the observed order of the human faculties, that, instead of an original and instinctive faith, we shall regard it as the result of a derivative process, so quick it may be that we are sensible neither of time nor of succession in the transition of the mind from its premises to its conclusion—yet a real transition notwithstanding, a reasoning upward from the effect to its cause; and, as the result of this, a doctrine, not fundamental in the sense of its being first known, but a doctrine which rests on a previous fact or finding, being itself reared and sustained on the foundation of an *argumentum a posteriori*.

2. But, however the mental philosophy of this question may be settled, one thing is certain—that the natural theology of conscience is the alone natural theology of the species at large, and the only one which can be turned to great and general account in practice, or is of much influence in the business of the pulpit. The theology of academic demonstration should seldom, if ever, be made the subject of more than a passing notice there; and that chiefly in words of remonstrance for the occasional philosophic hearers, when trying to arouse them from their deep indifference to that God, of whose reality even the science which themselves so much idolize, gives such striking attestations. And yet should this take effect, it will but throw them back on the theology of conscience, which, after all, forms the main staple of those first and rudimental lessons in which a minister should deal. Nor is it a theology which he needs to prove. He might with all safety proceed upon it. He will find the popular mind even of the rudest congregation pre-occupied therewith, and in a state of readiness and recipiency for any right demonstration which he may be pleased to ground upon it. And it is this natural theology, and not the other, which brings to recognition

the moral character and perfections of the Deity; which invests Him with the high state and sovereignty of a Lawgiver; which has to do with jurisprudence, as founded on God's rightful authority over the creatures whom He has formed. It is thus that we find a ready-made inlet both to the fears and the consciences of the people; and that when we speak to them of guilt and of danger, and of a righteous God who is angry with sinners every day, and of a future reckoning at His judgment-seat, and of the dread vengeance which awaits the impenitent and ungodly—it is not a strange matter which we bring to their ears, nor do we speak to them in vocables either unfelt or unknown.

3. But we must not let any single object monopolize the whole field of vision. Some, when they have first made discovery of this natural theology of conscience, would forthwith place out of view the theology which is grounded on the evidence of design, as manifested in the laws and dispositions of the material world. To make the room which they demand for their own idea, they not only would subordinate all others—they would dispossess all others; and thus it is, that in a certain London school, there is now arising a sort of town-made theology, which would make no account of the philosophy of external nature, or of its contributions to the cause of theism. They seem to contend that the primary evidence of conscience should carry, and that exclusively, our belief in a God. In this they are not far wrong; but wrong they most assuredly are in affirming the utter nullity of the argument from design. We trust to have made it palpable that it is in no way affected by the sophistries of Hume; and that the workmanship of nature affords a firm experimental basis on which to reason for the artificer who framed it—serving for the indication of a God, and not merely for an illustration of His wisdom and of His ways. They who deny this, though for the sake, it may be, of magnifying one evidence at the expense and to the disparagement of another, would in fact put out one of the lights of theology—a lesser light, if they will, but sufficient to challenge the consideration of all physical inquirers; and failing this, to condemn their heedlessness of a God. Yet while we thus contend that nature, throughout all her departments, teems with the evidences of design, and so of a designer, it is the high prerogative of conscience—not only to tell us first of the existence of God, but to be, anterior to revelation, the alone informer of His righteousness, and so the the alone teacher of the moral relationship in which we stand

to Him. We most willingly, therefore, award to this highest faculty of our nature its rightful pre-eminence in the theology of nature—insomuch that to its lessons the philosopher as well as the peasant must at length come, to learn of God, as the Parent and Governor of the human family. Nay, we are willing that, on the intimation of conscience alone, the question of His existence should be held as determined; and that it should not be kept in abeyance till the explorers of the material world make report to us of their discoveries, and tell what traces or what manifestations they have found in their respective fields of observation. We hold that each science has its natural theology; and that each teems, not only with specimens of the workmanship, but with proofs for the being of a God. But that is no reason why we should be constantly laying at this foundation, or keeping this most momentous of all doctrines perpetually on its trial—and that too, when, with a voice so audible, and a light so overpowering, even at the earliest stages of a man's mental and moral history,—this is a truth which has been already given to him. We are, therefore, most abundantly willing that man should go forth upon nature, not now in quest of a God, but pre-occupied with a full sense and conviction of His reality—knowing Him, and that with an assurance which requires no argumentative addition, to be the Author and Artificer of this goodly universe; and making a study of Him there, not to learn of His existence, but to learn of His ways—just as we should make study of a volume, not to verify its authorship, but to ascertain the mind and manner of its author, and to acquire the lessons of that work which had issued from his hands.

4. Now to us there seems an analogy or a counterpart to all this in the evidences of Christianity. For, first, if there be enough in the human conscience to insure a reception for the doctrines of the natural, there seems also enough to insure a reception for the doctrines of the revealed theology. For the truth of both, we believe, there is a way to the consciences of men. If in the one case the doctrine of a God, simply on being propounded and without any formal attempt to prove it, can find, as it were, an access for itself to the innermost convictions of a man's spirit, the same holds of the doctrine of a Saviour. We might work the faith of the gospel in the minds of others, though we should deal only with the subject-matter and never once advert to its credentials—or rather, in the exhibition of this subject-matter, its best and highest credentials might be-

come patent to the eye of an observer, and in virtue of its own self-evidencing power, his convictions might be carried. We have repeatedly affirmed in your hearing, that of all the evidences, this in our estimation is the one of first-rate quality; and that mainly to its efficacy do we look for the Christianization of the people. To us it is a contemplation big with interest, that for the establishment of a right and rational belief, whether in the doctrines of the natural or the revealed theology, we have a direct highway through the consciences of the people; and that within the homestead of their own bosoms there are such vouchers for the truth, as that the bare statement of it may carry not their blind, but their enlightened acquiescence—and this without the aid either of logical or historical demonstrations. Yet it follows not that we should undervalue these, whether the argument from design for the existence of a God, or the argument from history for the truth of the Christian miracles, and so for the truth of the Christian religion. Each of these arguments has a force and a most important practical function of its own—the former, if not to make an atheist pious, at least to condemn his atheism; the latter, if not to make an infidel a faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, at least to condemn his infidelity. We believe that, in either case, it is only the evidence which passes through the organ of conscience that tells personally and influentially on the heart or character of man—so as in the first instance to make him feel duteously towards God, and, in the second instance, either to awaken a concern for his soul, or to make him feel desirously after his salvation. But that is no reason why all other evidence must therefore be discarded, whether the argument of final causes, or the historical argument for the truth of Christianity. Of the latter, more especially, it has been long our opinion that an historical demonstration of the reality of the Christian miracles should still do at present what the actual and ocular exhibition of them either did or ought to have done in the days of the apostles. Even then the sight of miracles did not of itself convert or Christianize men, any more than the record of them, however strong or satisfying its credentials, can of itself do now. But there is one thing which it both should and can do. The sight of the miracles then, should at the very least have secured a respectful attention for what the apostles said; and the proof of these miracles now, should secure the same respectful attention for what the apostles have written. In either case the subject-matter of Christianity

is brought into immediate contact with the mind of the inquirer; and then it is that the converting evidence comes into play, or that evidence which worketh the faith that is unto salvation. They are only the credentials within the book which are of prevailing force to make the intent reader a disciple of the Lord Jesus; but they are the credentials without the book which point the inquirer's way to this sacred volume, and should be of prevailing force to fix his attention on that word; whereunto if he give earnest heed, the day will dawn and the day-star arise in his heart. Such, then, is the high and important function of the historical evidence, and we are therefore unwilling to give it up—just as unwilling as to give up the argument of design in natural theology. It is of all others the best adapted to the philosophical habitudes of our day—as serving to indicate, and by a process of sound derivative observation to certify the facts of a religion which professes to be founded upon fact; and which therefore the worshippers of modern science cannot, but by a traversal of their own principles, with incredulity turn from. We do not say that if they stop short and refuse to read the Bible, even after it has been irresistibly proved on historic grounds to be a written message from heaven to earth—this proof will have the effect to convert them; but it will have the effect to condemn them, because they do stop short, and because this book, of far the brightest and highest credentials among all within the compass of bygone authorship, has been suffered to remain unread and unopened by them. We are sensible that to have the belief which saves the soul, the proudest of our philosophers is on a level with the homeliest of our peasants, and must drink in truth at the same fountainhead—that is, immediately at the fountainhead of inspiration. But that is no reason why we should turn with disdain from the historical evidence, which, to the eye of scholars, is the most direct and legible of all those evidences that lead to the Bible, as an authentic and authoritative record of the will of God. We cannot be indifferent to an argument, the best fitted to tell, on the comparatively few it may be, but these the highest class of thinkers in our land—and either to overbear them, should they venture to assert the cause of infidelity on the field of literary debate; or better still, to propitiate their friendship for the gospel of Jesus Christ, and secure the benefit of an example which might operate with salutary and wide-spread influence on society at large.

5. It will at once be seen, however, that this is not an argu-

ment for the pulpit, where it is your proper office to bring the Word of God to bear immediately on human consciences. The great use of the historical evidence is, that it shuts men up to the reading of their Bibles—an exercise again, which, if honestly and prayerfully gone through, will shut them up unto the faith. The study of the one brings them within sight of the subject-matter of Christianity; but it is only in the study of this subject-matter that they come within sight of those things which tell with convincing and converting energy on the soul of man. There are some who must be satisfied with the credentials of the messenger, ere they will hear the message; but they who come to church have placed themselves already within the hearing of it, where surely the business on hand is to set forth not the messengers but the message, and all the more that it bears within itself the evidence of its own truthfulness—that too being the only evidence which gives the faith that is unto salvation. It were surely preposterous to attempt the doing of that mediately which might be done immediately—or to try an evidence which is placed at the distance of at least one remove from the human conscience, when in circumstances for wielding the evidence at first hand, which comes into juxtaposition therewith. This consideration is decisive with the great majority of congregations, where they are but the few who have the education or the leisure for the prosecution of the historical or literary argument. But even for these few, it were a most absurd preference of the remote and the secondary to the primary and the direct, to deliver a sermon on the bearers of the Divine communication, where by preaching on the substance of it, you bring at once the self-evidencing power into operation, and thus open a way for the truth and the authority of God's own voice.

6. But it is even not your business in the pulpit to expatiate on the virtues of this self-evidencing power, or on the rationale of its influence and effect over the convictions of men. That is my business, not yours. To you belongs the executive task, not of theorizing on this internal evidence, but of putting it into actual operation. Be assured that you might be as unintelligible to the great mass of your hearers in describing the process of their understandings, when by means of the internal evidence they come to discern, and discern rightly, that God is in the Scriptures of a truth—as if you described to them Berkeley's Theory of Vision, which assigns, and with perfect justness, all the footsteps of that procedure by which the home-

liest peasant judges on the evidence of his outward senses, and with as great accuracy as does the most accomplished philosopher, of magnitudes and distances in the perspective before him. Now, it is almost as little a theme for the pulpit to philosophize on the former as it is to philosophize on the latter of these two processes—on the method or law of the spiritual, as on the method or law of the sensible vision. Your proper and precise employment is not to explain the process, but to set it working. Your office is not to describe, but to stimulate this operation. Here we may have to do with its rationale—there what you have to do with is the execution of it. We do not say that by any agency of yours you can achieve the whole of this great fulfilment—that is the translation of the mind of any hearer from darkness to the marvellous light of the gospel. Nevertheless you bear a certain, and generally speaking, an indispensable part in it; and that is simply the presentation of those truths, which, with the blessing of God, when rightly seen or rightly apprehended, are of power so to enlighten as to sanctify and save the soul. We say, with the blessing of God; for while it is your task to place the doctrines of His word within view of the people, it is His Spirit who opens their hearts to attend to them, opens their eyes to behold them, opens their understandings to understand them; and all so as that the gospel enters into their minds with power, and with the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance. In other words, your function, as a fellow-worker with God, is to preach this gospel. It is to cast the seed into the ground, which groweth up you know not how—just as little, it may be, as the sower knoweth of physiology, or the secret processes of vegetation. What you have to deal with is the subject-matter of Christianity; and your proper care, as faithful stewards of the mysteries of God, is to see that the things which are written pass without change or injury from the Bible to the pulpit, where they become in your mouth the things which are spoken. Your part is to cast them abroad among the people, and to look for those showers of grace from on high which penetrate the soil of the heart, and by a process there to you untraceable, and which it is not at all your province to describe, cause the fruits of righteousness to spring up abundantly.

7. It is thus, in fact, that every man ought to proceed, whether it be the aim to make good his own Christianity or the Christianity of others. The Bible is the instrument that he

works by—the Holy Spirit is the agent whom he seeks to; and by dint of earnest study on the one hand, and earnest supplication on the other, light out of darkness is made to arise upon his soul; yet not a light, as we have already said, without evidence, but a light by evidence; and in virtue of which, his is a rational and intelligent faith—recommending itself to the natural faculties of observation and consciousness, even though a supernatural Being has had to do with the production of it. We shall not repeat the explanations that we have given of this process, but would rather found upon it that most fruitful of all advices in the study of Divinity—a prayerful reading of the Bible—the only sure and direct way by which each might verify the process in his own experience. It is on this consideration that I have not recommended a great amount or variety of reading on the external evidence for the truth of Scripture. I have only specified a few books upon the subject; but those who have a decided aptitude or taste for this walk of professional literature, will easily find their way to the requisite authorship by which to prosecute and extend it. My wish, I confess, is that your chief study should be in the book, rather than about the book; and that ample room should be left for the more prolific of these two studies—when by one and the same effort your mind is brought into converse or juxtaposition, both with the contents of the message, and with the very best and most satisfying of its credentials. You know that I want all of you to be acquainted, and some of you to be singularly and superlatively accomplished in the whole scholarship of the Christian evidences—and that in order to strengthen the bulwarks of the Church, or for the purpose of your holding argument, whether for defence or conviction, with its adversaries and aliens of all classes. But I want none of you so to linger at the threshold as to remain without, strangers to the glories of the inner temple; or, in other words, that you should tarry at the precincts of the Sacred Volume, and meanwhile keep aloof from those doctrines which announce both their own truth and their own preciousness. However humbling it may be to the pride of science, we will not disguise the truth, that for any saving influence, you get at your faith in the very way in which the homeliest peasant gets at his, even though he should have received the impulse to his Bible under the parental roof, and you should have received it within the walls of a university. You begin upon equal terms; or rather, if he entered on the habit which I now recommend

at the commencement of his boyhood, and you only enter on it now, he has the advantage of an earlier outset on the right path which guides to that knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ that is life everlasting. But I have no reason to presume that the Bible has not been your daily companion as long as it has been his; and all I want to impress upon you is, that the scholarship of a college should never lead you to slight or to slacken that humbler, it may be thought, but still that right and religious and only productive scholarship which is common to you both, and in the prosecution of which it is that both are in the like favourable circumstances for becoming wise unto salvation. It is the Spirit shining upon the word which illuminates the soul of each of these inquirers—the fruit of their earnest perusals and their earnest prayers.

8. And what is true of the process by which to make good our own Christianity, is alike true of the process by which to make good the Christianity of others—the special office of clergymen. On this subject we are not aware of a more instructive passage in the whole Bible than is the brief utterance made by the apostles, when under the feeling that it was not for them to leave the word of God and to serve tables, they resigned into the hands of deacons, the care and management of those alms which had been contributed for the poor. Their saying pleased the whole multitude; but the part of their saying of weightiest application to our present argument is, that "we will give ourselves wholly to prayer and to the ministry of the word." What we lay our chief stress upon is the co-ordinate importance given to these two things, preaching and prayer. Both are indispensable. It is the word of God, and nothing else, deposited in the heart, which germinates the faith that is unto salvation—even as it is the seed, to which the word has been compared, and nothing else, deposited in the soil, that germinates the fruits of the earth. But just as in the economy of the world there can be no natural vegetation without the descent of rain from the heavens—so in the economy of grace there can be no spiritual vegetation without the descent of living water from on high. For the one essential element of this operation—that is, the word—there must be preaching; for the other essential element there must be prayer—an expedient alike available, whether for our own Christianity or that of others. If for our own, then are we told that God giveth His Holy Spirit to them who ask it; if for others, then are we told that God willeth intercessions to be

made for all men, and on the express ground, too, that He willeth all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

9. We trust you already perceive that the agency of the Spirit in the production of saving faith does not supersede the law of evidence in the mind of the hearer, or that law which binds together his resulting conviction with its proximate cause in the proof or argument which went before it. But we go further and say, that neither does this doctrine of the Spirit supersede the law or method of demonstration on the part of the speaker, or exempt him from the duty of selecting and arranging so those topics of Scripture in which he is to deal as to make a right and orderly distribution of this argument. We must deal with scriptural as we should with natural reasons—that is, deal with them logically. We must study the fitness of this one and that other doctrine in the objective revelation, to this one and that other state of the subjective mind, in the hearers whom we address. Some, says the apostle Jude, save with fear—that is, if there be any stout-hearted sinner in the congregation, shake him out of his hardihood by the terrors of the law. Of others, he says, have compassion, making a difference—that is, if there be a contrite or trembling penitent amongst them, ply him in all tenderness with the gospel offers of reconciliation. It is most true, that the Spirit alone gives effect to all our teaching, and yet there is a better and a worse method of teaching notwithstanding; and just as much as there is a best way of propounding to scholars the lessons of any science, so there is a best way of propounding to its disciples, according to the capacities and the progress of each, the lessons of Christianity.

10. Let me therefore specify what these lessons are, at least such of them as are of most vital importance—and with some regard, too, to the order in which they succeed each other, or to the relation which they bear either to different states of mind, or different stages of inquiry. We are fully persuaded of these lessons, that in virtue of an inherent evidence they are able to work out the manifestation of their own truth to the consciences of hearers; and that thus the business of the pulpit might be made to exemplify the demonstrations of the class-room. We hold it therefore our most appropriate concluding effort, to point out the connexion between the theory, if it may be so called, which has been propounded here, and its corresponding verification in your practice hereafter; or between the lessons of our

professorial course, and the future experience which awaits you as ministers of the gospel.

11. Let me intimate in one brief sentence the first and earliest state of recipiency in which you will find even the rudest and the most unfurnished of your hearers. Each has a conscience with a sense of God and His law; and each has a consciousness with a sense of guilt because of deficiency therefrom. On this rudimental stage, if it may be so called, of the religious scholarship both the light of nature and the light of revelation shed their concurrent attestations; and if the Spirit interpose, whose office it is to convince of sin, He can both arm the denunciations of Scripture with greater force and fearfulness to the sinner's ear, and tell him more emphatically than ever the deep ungodliness of his own heart—not inscribing aught that is new either on the outer or the inner tablet, but making the characters of both stand forth more brightly and legibly to the view of the inquirer. With such an instrument in the hands of such an agent—with such a doctrine to preach and such a Spirit to pray for, you are in a state of full equipment for subduing the people under you; and those of them who listen as they ought, and feel as they ought, are in a state of full preparation for this great initial lesson of the Christian discipleship. You may proceed therefore at once to tell them of an angry God and an undone eternity, and of a sentence from which, under the just and unchangeable government of Him who wields the sceptre of the universe, and is Lord of the spirits of all flesh, there is no escaping; and of the high authority of Heaven's law and the dignity and sacredness of Heaven's throne. Knowing these terrors of the Lord, your work, and a work on which you might enter at once or from the very commencement of your ministry, is to persuade men.

12. But though you begin thus, you do not end thus. Yours is not a message of despair, but of glad tidings and of great joy. It may be right to alarm, but this only to excite inquiry and desire after a place of escape and safety. It may be right to warn your spiritual patients of their disease, but this that they may be led to welcome the great and only Physician. The same sermon might give forth a demonstration of both, or one sermon may prescribe the cure, while another prepares both for the reception and the operation of it. There are in the science of salvation, if I may thus speak, as in all other subjects and sciences—there are the elementary lessons which guide and

qualify for the lessons of a higher discipleship. Accordingly, we are told that the law is a schoolmaster for bringing unto Christ. There should therefore be the preaching of the law as well as the preaching of the gospel. Neither should be neglected by any minister; though with that usual diversity of gifts which is observable both in the economy of nature and of grace, one may be better qualified for the first, and so be a Boanerges, or son of thunder, another may be better qualified for the second, and so be a Barnabas, or son of consolation. And thus might we recognise in every Christian church some whose peculiar talent it is to arouse and convince, and some whose peculiar talent it is to heal and to convert; and, to give but one specimen more of this variety, some who have acquired their experience and skill in the more advanced stages of this Christian education, and whose special faculty it is to build up or to edify. There are distinct functions or departments in this work of spiritual architecture; and had we as many distinct functionaries as functions, which we have not, then should we be able to point out him who planteth and him who watereth—the man who can break whole hearts, and the man who can heal broken ones—the wise master-builder who lays the foundation, the labourer who succeeds and who builds thereupon.

13. But my present subject is not the right constitution for a church, or what ought to be the variety of its labourers—it is to let you know what is the actual variety of your future labours, and in the prosecution of which you will find, that, to meet all the essential lessons in which you deal, there may, even with the homeliest and most unlettered of your hearers, be a conscience to own and a capacity to receive them. I have already affirmed this of the lesson that they are great sinners, and the same we affirm as confidently of the lesson that Christ is a great Saviour. There is, however, this distinction between the two—that whereas for convincing them of sin, they have both a conscience which could tell them what sin is, and a consciousness which could tell that themselves are sinners; and thus, with their previous knowledge both of the objective and the subjective, they can recognise the accordance between what the Bible says they are, and what they find themselves to be—they have no such previous knowledge of the objective Jesus Christ, as might help them to understand the fitness or power of His mediatorship for their salvation. The doctrine of Christ and of Him crucified was a complete novelty to the world; yet novelty

though it is, there is a counterpart something in the human spirit to meet and to answer it. The sinner could never have devised or discovered such a method of salvation; but after it is proposed, he might discern, and that with the most vivid of all perceptions, for he might feel, its perfect adaptation to the urgent sense that is within him of the necessities of his moral nature; and thus although food had been a novelty, yet when presented for the first time to the man in want of it, his hunger would lead him to appropriate, and thus to experience, the virtue it had to relieve and to sustain him. So may the bread of life which came down from heaven draw the soul towards it, of him who, labouring under the burden of his guilt, now hungers and thirsts after righteousness.

14. It is thus that conscience has to do not only with the doctrine of sin, but with the doctrine of a Saviour. There is a felt harmony between the objective and the subjective in both. If with the one, the truth of Scripture have its vouchers and its recommendations in the heart of man when convinced of what he is—with the other, the truth of Scripture has its vouchers and its recommendations also in the heart of man when convinced of what he needs: and the intervention of the Spirit is as much called for in the latter as in the former manifestation. It is He who takes of the things of Christ, which are the things that the Bible tells of Christ, and shows them unto the soul—just as it is He also who makes known to the soul its guilt and its nakedness. It is then that the blood of Christ is felt to be that which is precisely suited to it, and the sacrifice of a divine High priest to be the only adequate satisfaction for the sin committed against a divine Lawgiver. It is in the believing contemplation of this great article of our faith, that the misgivings of conscience are appeased, and God maintains the sacredness of His character even in the act of passing by the transgressions of His rebellious children. The same Spirit who before convinced of sin now convinces of righteousness, and the peace of the sinner is laid on a secure foundation, when freed from His guilty fears. He is made to see that God is just while the justifier of them who believe in Jesus.

15. This should be the grand theme of your ministrations, and so much was it the capital figure in his scheme of doctrine, that Paul said to one of his churches, that he was determined to know nothing amongst them save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. The great initial obstacle in the way of our being right

with God—the knot of difficulty which has to be untied—the separating barrier, and what stands as a wall of iron between us and our reconciliation, is—How shall I, a sinner, find acceptance with a God of justice? This, if not at all times the formally uttered, is the universally felt complaint of conscious and guilty nature; and this, we repeat, can only be met and only be satisfied, by the setting forth of Jesus Christ as the propitiation for the sins of the world. It is this which resolves the question —wherewithal shall I appear before God? You appear in the name of Christ—with His death as your discharge from condemnation, and His righteousness as your right to the rewards of eternity. It is thus that He is offered, even to the chief of sinners; and it is your closing with this offer which forms the turning-point of your salvation. On the part of God it is freely held out to you; on your part it is simply laid hold of. I wish I could adequately express the naked simplicity of this transaction. It is a statement on his part; it is a belief on yours. It is a gift on His part; it is an acceptance on yours. Like the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness, it is the presentation of an object on His part; it is a looking to that object upon yours. It is a call or invitation on His part; it is a compliance upon yours. On His part it is a promise, on yours it is a trusting in the performance of it. No sinner needs be afraid of trusting too strongly, for the firmer the confidence on his part, the surer will be the counterpart fulfilment on the part of God, who, now that the great expiation has been rendered, can, without disparagement to the law, extend full indemnity to them who have broken it, can be just whilst the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

16. You have so to deal with your people as to gain them over to this simple credence in the averments of the gospel. It is the very simplicity of such a faith which forms an obstacle in the way of conceiving it. The legal spirit of man feels all its tendencies traversed, and so does not readily coalesce with this method of salvation. The ambassador from Syria thought it too meagre a prescription for his leprosy to bathe in the waters of Jordan; and such, too, is the feeling of many an inquirer, when told to wash out his sins in the blood of the Lamb. He wants to obtain his qualification for heaven in a more operose way than by a simple faith in a simple testimony, to believe and live. In all likelihood he would have entertained the matter more willingly, had the belief been to be reached by him along

the footsteps of a lengthened and logical demonstration. But he cannot understand the virtue which lies in the bare proposition that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures—and seen, too, not through a medium of reasoning, but in the light, as it were, of its own simple manifestation. Nevertheless it is even so; and it is your part to labour so with the consciences of your people, that between the statements of Scripture, and the state of their own hearts, this light may be made to arise. It was thus that Paul travailed in birth among his converts till Christ was formed in them. There was in this operation what he termed a striving in prayer—not prayer, however, without a ministration of the word, nor yet a ministration of the word without prayer, but by the fruitful union of both, he worked mightily, yet with full dependence on the grace that worked in him mightily; and thus the gospel came unto them, not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.

17. But this result will not follow with any other than that free gospel by which salvation is represented as not of works, but altogether of grace. It is only by the pure word of truth that the mind of your people can be carried. I cannot exaggerate the feeling I have of its importance—that the heralds of mercy should make overture of eternal life to all who hear them on the footing of a gift, the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and this without mixture and without composition, apart from conditions and from all consideration of any righteousness of our own. There is nothing that will so mar the success of your preaching, or throw so fatal an obstruction in the way of it, as if you piece the merit of human obedience along with the merit of Christ, and so make them both enter together into the foundation of their acceptance with God. It is true that the foundation on which you invite them to lean must be a foundation of righteousness; but it will give way under them, it will not long sustain even the tranquillity of their own spirits, unless this be exclusively and altogether the righteousness of Christ. And while you thus urge upon them the perfect simplicity of the object, you must also demand from them a like simplicity in the act of faith. You must never cease to tell them that it is by faith alone, by faith without works, that they are justified. I wish that upon this subject I could make adequate conveyance to your minds of the mind and spirit of Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians. There you will find what I labour to impress as that which holds an indispensable and an initial place in the

ministry of the gospel, and without which the people under you will never attain to solid peace, just because they have not been led to lean their whole weight on a compact and homogeneous basis. To admit the righteousness of man by ever so little into the title-deed of heaven, is to admit a flaw into the security. It is to vitiate our claim for that purchased inheritance which Christ won by His own services when He stood alone, and of the people there were none with Him. The utterance of His name —when all our dependence—ascends to God like the incense of a sweet-smelling savour. But a single iota along with it of dependence on ourselves, is like the dead fly in a pot of ointment, which takes all its healing virtue out of the medicine, and Christ becomes of no effect to us. On Him we must rest exclusively, else we shall fall from grace, and that because the groundwork of our confidence, like the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image, is partly of clay and partly of iron. In other words, the doctrine of justification by faith is powerless, if it be not of justification by faith alone. This is the great battle-axe which, in the hand of the Spirit, gives might and efficacy to the demonstrations of the pulpit. Its singleness is that in which its great strength lies, for then it is out and out of one divine quality, without mixture and without contamination. Thus freed from all that is adventitious, it is the pure aliment of the soul; and the report thereof by the mouth of the preacher is that pure word the entrance of which giveth light, even the marvellous light of the gospel. It is this simple revelation which gives health to the wearied spirit, and causes it greatly to delight in the abundance of truth and peace.*

18. Such I hold to be the foundation of all real Christianity, but we are not to be laying at it constantly. Christianity does not end thus; it only begins thus. Doubtless, the first thing to be attended to in our relation with God, is that the enmity of nature shall be turned into peace. I have been endeavouring to point out by how very simple a transition this is effected. Peace is the universal proclamation. It is held out to every man. If man will only cease from his distrust, God hath ceased from His displeasure, and now calls on every son and every daughter of Adam to draw nigh. The ministers of the gospel are His am-

* It is essential to the success of gospel preaching that the offers of reconciliation shall be laid before men and urged on their acceptance upon the footing of free grace.—Rom. v. 11, 15; viii. 32; Gal. iii. 2; v. 4; Rom. xi. 6; vi. 23; 1 John v. 11; Isaiah xlv. 22; John iii. 16; Rev. xxii. 17.

bassadors on this errand of the world's pacification; and in discharge of this commission, they are authorized to make the free and unconditional tender of forgiveness and friendship from God to each and all of the human species. There is no speech nor language where their voice might not be heard—a voice of welcome and good-will from the mercy-seat on high to all the sinners who are upon the face of the earth. And this invitation is as specific as it is universal—so as either to be flung abroad without reserve in the hearing of the multitude, or laid at the feet and urged with all importunity and tenderness on the acceptance of each individual. As messengers of this grace, you might either bear it from house to house, or sound it forth in the midst of the great congregation. You can knock with it at every door and solicit admittance for it into every heart. And if this offer of salvation might be thus freely held out on your part, it might be as freely laid hold of with simple trust and acceptance upon theirs. They have to receive the offered boon; they have to believe in its reality, and according to their faith so is it done unto them. It is thus that the relation of peace with the Lawgiver in heaven is entered on; and this blessed change is felt in the sinner's guilty bosom, who sees that in the blood of Christ his guilt is washed away; and as he looks with full assurance of heart on this transition from a state of war to a state of amity with God, has great peace and joy in the contemplation of it.

19. But it concerns us to know that this is not the only change consequent on our reception of the Christian faith. Its outset is peace, but its fruit and final result is holiness. The one is but the introduction to the other as the landing-place. There is nothing which I deem of greater importance in Christianity, than the pure and perfect conjunction of these two elements—all the more necessary for you to apprehend, that there is a tendency to disjoin them. The gospel is so constructed that it, in the first instance, holds out to all who will, a secure and absolute reconciliation with God, nay, bids even the chief of sinners place his undoubting reliance thereupon—insomuch that, when it tells him of salvation by faith, it but tells him of this privilege that is all the surer in itself the more sure he is of it in his own mind. Nothing then can exceed the fulness of that warrant on which the believer might rejoice, and from the very outset, in his felt and conscious peace with God. But the matter does not stop here. The revelation under which we sit is made up of more than one statement, just as the theological system

constructed thereupon is made up of more than one article. There is an offered reconciliation, in virtue of which the disciple on the moment of his believing may from the very first walk before God without fear; and there is also an offered regeneration, in virtue of which the same disciple will from the very first enter on a new life, and walk before God in righteousness and holiness all the days of it. And these two things are not only offered, but enjoined—first, to accept of reconciliation, as when we are told in one place, Come, and I will receive you; and second, to submit ourselves to regeneration, as when told in another place, "Come, and I will pour out my Spirit upon you." Now what God has thus joined, man would put asunder—as knowing not how far to put fully and freely together the gospel immunity and the gospel obligation. Some there are who, to make room for the latter, would impair and mutilate the former—that is, in order to secure the personal righteousness of the disciple, they would lay their exceptions and qualifications on the grace by which he is pardoned. Others there are who, to magnify this grace, and make all in all of it, would cast preceptive Christianity into the shade, if not sink it altogether—that is, in order to exalt the Saviour, would refuse all attention, not to the claims only, but to the character of the sinner, to the services which are expected at his hand, and that way of new obedience by which alone the ransomed of the Lord can find an entrance into the Jerusalem above. But Christ will not be divided thus: and if faith is to save us at all, it must be a whole faith in a whole testimony. The essence of good preaching lies in harmonizing justification with sanctification, and in pressing them equally home. There is room for both in the Bible, and there should be room for both in your sermons. It is your part to make full declaration both of repentance towards God and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There ought never to have been a conflict between these two great and high arguments—the one, in truth, being the animating principle by which the other is originated at the first, and carried forward through successive stages of our moral and spiritual education, till we become perfect even as our Father in heaven is perfect.

20. But I can prosecute these themes no longer, else I might have pointed out more explicitly how prolific they are of evidence, even to those whose opportunities give them access to nothing more than the subject-matter of Christianity, whether as read by themselves in the Bible, or as expounded to them by

the minister from the pulpit. In this, and in this alone, there is enough to challenge their attention at the outset; enough to perpetuate this attention, and fasten it more and more; enough to call forth the aspirations and the prayers of moral earnestness; enough, with the manifestations of the Spirit, to unveil the glories of the book, and cause to be felt as well as seen those profound and precious adaptations to the necessities of the soul, which announce that the hand of a Divinity is there; and finally, enough when, under the weight of this constraining influence, the inquirer is led to make the promises of Christianity his hope, and its precepts his task-work; enough in the lights which are struck out between the word and his own experience reciprocating therewith, to shed, at each new step in his spiritual progress, a verification ever brightening and ever repeating, on the truth as it is in Jesus. And so it comes back to our old position, that the way to make right and rational believers in a parish is plainly and scripturally to preach the gospel to them. You do not need to set up a formal argument about its credentials—not even to speak of them. You have but to make faithful exposition of the message; and this, in virtue of its own self-evidencing power, shuts men up unto the faith.

21. This will become still more palpable when, in the ulterior parts of our course, we are called on to set forth the doctrines of the Christian revelation.

CHAPTER IX.

ON SCRIPTURE CRITICISM.

1. Now that your studies have been conducted thus far, you may not perhaps be prepared for the announcement that, even still, you can scarcely be said to have entered on the science of the Christian theology. You, in fact, are only yet upon the threshold of it. You may by this time have learned the credentials of the message; but with the exception of what you may have looked to for the purpose of building up an internal evidence, you may not have learned the substance or the contents of it. In proportion, no doubt, as you advance in this latter study, will you find that the internal evidence brightens and accumulates the more. But meanwhile, long after you have been

satisfied on the question, "Who the letter comes from?"—there is still in reserve another question of surpassing importance, and to which the former stands but in a subordinate and subservient relation—we mean the question, "What the letter says?"

2. And here let me remark on the glaring practical inconsistency of those who delude themselves into the imagination of their belief in Christianity, because, as the fruit it may be of their lengthened and laborious research, they have come to an orthodox conclusion on the first of these questions, while they persist in deepest lethargy and unconcern on the second of them. They may be profoundly read in the Deistical controversy—they may have mastered the whole scholarship of the argumentative evidence for the general truth of Christianity—they may have explored the erudition of all that history which attaches to the professed revelations of Mahomet and Jesus Christ; and if assuredly they are not Mussulmans, seeing they have rejected the one, what else can they be but Christians, in that they have received the other? This treacherous imagination is exemplified not alone by the theological student, for we hold it to be widely prevalent in society. It is not infidelity, because they hold the gospel to be an authentic communication from heaven to earth; and it is not Christianity, because they hold in utter indifference the matter of this communication. This monstrous perversity of a Christianity in the brief, without a Christianity in the detail—this admission of the book without acquaintance with the book, or the slightest care to be acquainted with it—this hollow, unsubstantial mockery of a faith without knowledge, of a creed without articles, has in it certain moral aggravations which makes it in some respects to surpass in guilt an open and resolute and declared enmity to revelation. To labour that you may ascertain the question whence a given communication may have come; and after you have succeeded in convincing yourself that it hath come from the very pavilion of the residence of God, to feel that you are now discharged of all further attention to the matter, and so to think no more of it—to proceed so far in your studies as to become satisfied that the message is actually His, and then, as if this were the signal for contempt and carelessness, to feel that now your studies on the message have terminated, and you need have no more to do with it—to acquiesce, as many do, in the general position, that Scripture is the genuine record of those various embassies which have passed

from the heaven above to the men of our lower world; and yet, as if nauseating its phraseology, or at least as if regardless to the uttermost of its informations and its facts, to be habitually heedless of it from day to day as a despised and forgotten thing —thus to suffer that Bible, on whose evidences you may have for months been expending the utmost strenuousness of thought, to lie beside you with its contents unread, unopened, unattended to—there is in all this a delinquency of spirit and of principle which would not only nullify the good of all your previous acquisitions, but which would convert them into the grounds of your more emphatic condemnation. Let me therefore repeat, that you sin against light, and turn that which might be the savour of life into the savour of death—if, after having ascertained from whom the letter comes, you proceed not in all reverence and docility of spirit, and with a mind still more intent on the substance than it ever was on the proofs of the communication, to ascertain further what the letter says.

3. And let me here observe, that, while it is the urgent and indispensable duty of the people to know what the Bible says in our vernacular tongue, it is most desirable that each of you, the future ministers of our land, should know what the Bible says in its original languages. This I hold not only to be a right and respectable accomplishment for all clergymen, but I should regard it as a mutilated Church—and that, like an incomplete apparatus, it was bereft or crippled in some of its essential parts, did it not number at least so many of its sons among the the first critics and philologists of our age. The Church, viewed as an organic and complicated structure, is wanting in some of its essential members, certain of its important functions are suspended, it fulfils not all the high purposes of its establishment in society—if there be not a goodly number of its ministers profoundly versant, and without the stepping-stone of translations, not merely in the idiomatic phraseology of all the books which enter into the canon of Scripture, but in the ponderous and recondite scholarship of those mighty tomes which, in the shapes of Polyglots and Prolegomena and Thesauruses, lie piled in vast and venerable products on the least frequented shelves of our public libraries—standing there, however, in a sort of monumental character, having been bequeathed to us by the gigantic men of other days, as the memorials of an erudition and of an arduous and indefatigable perseverance that are now unknown. I confess that there are few things which I should like better to

witness than the revival of this massive, this substantial lore in the Free Church of Scotland. Not that this is the only, nor indeed the chief service of her ministers, and not therefore that all should be embarked on it. But should I discover anything like a special aptitude for languages—should I be made to know of any among those now before me, whose power and whose literary passion lay in that direction—should I hear of but one, that he loved to grapple—I do not mean at present with the doctrinal, but with the verbal obscurities of the Old or New Testaments, and that in virtue of some skilful and well-supported emendation, he gave significancy and effect to such passages as were before impracticable : although far higher than an endowment of this kind I hold to be that wisdom of the Spirit by which man is enabled to compare " spiritual things with spiritual," we should be very far indeed from undervaluing that wisdom of the letter in virtue of which it is that we compare scriptural things with scriptural. But while we desiderate a superlative Biblical criticism for some of our ministers, we still more desiderate for them all a familiar acquaintance both with the Greek New Testament and with the Septuagint version of the Old. I should even recommend, not as the special accomplishment of a few, but as your general, I should like it your universal accomplishment, that you were so practised in Latin, as, if not to write in that densely energetic language *calamo currente*, at least to read it *oculo currente*. This you will soon find a very practicable work with the modern Latin of our Continental divines—as Luther, and Calvin, and Erasmus, and Grotius, and Witsius, and Turretin. I can even fancy an approach to a more Anglican structure and phraseology in the works of the Latin Fathers than you meet with in the works of the classics ; and certain it is, that even the Greek Fathers are so embued with the style of the original Scriptures, and, above all, so charged with the subject of them, as to be far more easily perused than the writers in that language to which you have already had access in the course of your previous education. So that really with the practice and perseverance of months, I feel quite confident that many of you, with an expertness always growing, would be perfectly at home among the pages of Jerome, and Augustine, and Origen, and Tertullian, and Eusebius. I should certainly rejoice in seeing our Church more leavened than it is with a wide-spread infusion of this sort of literature. And, then, for those select few whom nature may have furnished with

aptitudes and powers for the higher walks of it—for those who breathe in their best-loved element when steeped in the lore and among the languages of antiquity—for the men of rarer endowment, who, in climbing their upward way to the more hidden and elevated tracks of Christian scholarship, feel a supreme enjoyment in those unenvied treasures which meet them on their course—for those amateurs of sacred learning, who, whether in the exercise of their own original powers of interpretation, or in their laborious research among the versions and the authorities of other days, have a relish amounting to ecstacy in which so very few of our age can sympathize—why, though we neither can expect nor should desire these habits of arduousness and these heights of proficiency, from one and all of the Church's ministers—yet for the Church, on the whole, for her full equipment, and that her panoply may be completed, a few at least of such erudite and such highly lettered men appear to be indispensable. They form our mightiest men of war in the battles of the faith, both with daring infidelity on the one hand, and with lax and licentious heresy upon the other. Whether the question relates to the sense of Scripture or to the historic credibility of Scripture, these, holding as they do at first hand the materials of the argument, are far the most redoubted champions of orthodoxy. It is to them we owe it that the Church militant has withstood the shock of many an adverse collision, with all the science and the scholarship which, dissevered from religion, have laboured for its overthrow. There is a work of internal cultivation within the vineyard distinct from theirs, and I should say higher than theirs. There may be hundreds who labour with greater effect in our parishes. But these are the men to whose handiwork we look when we go round the walls of our Zion, and rejoice in the strength and the ornament of her bulwarks.

4. This is obviously not the class where the lessons of Scripture criticism in all the requisite fulness and detail can properly be given. Yet on us the duty lies of assigning the place which belongs to it in the science of theology; and its bearing on the system of Christian doctrine, as well as on that greatest of all practical interests—the correct instruction of the people in the truths, and precepts, and whole subject-matter of the Old and New Testaments. Ours, then, is not to deliver this scholarship, for which you must attend upon another Chair. But it is ours both to state now what the design and uses of the scholarship are, and afterwards to exemplify these throughout the various

passages and occasions of a course, the main object of which is both to establish and to vindicate the articles of our faith.

5. The two main objects of Scripture criticism are the integrity of the text, and the interpretation of it. The first question is, "What did the authors of Scripture really write?" The second, "What is the sense or meaning of it?" The former has been termed corrective or emendatory criticism, its object being to substitute the true in place of the false readings. The latter has been termed interpretative criticism.

6. There is one general remark alike applicable to both, and which we think it right to bring forth *in limine*, and that with the view to meet a certain vague and ill-defined prejudice on the part of those who would depreciate the importance of our being acquainted with the letter of Scripture, or with the literal sense of it. There is a confusion of sentiment into which pious Christians are apt to fall—and that too in very proportion to their piety. They have been led to ascribe the illumination of every Christian mind to a special influence by the Spirit of God, and to look with comparative indifference, if not with suspicion, on all that lore which is connected with the illustration of the Word of God. They are perplexed by the imagination of a something in the light of the Spirit, which supersedes the labours of human criticism. We hold it of importance, therefore, even at this early stage of your tuition, and though we anticipate a doctrine which belongs to the subject-matter of the Christian theology—to give a very brief exposition of the respective functions of the Spirit and of the Word. We feel persuaded that if this were rightly understood, it would be found that neither of these were of any efficacy apart from the other—that our most strenuous perusals of the word did not dispense us from the necessity of prayer for the Spirit; and that the promise of the Spirit did not discharge us from the intelligent perusal, neither did it lessen the value of our erudite and philological study, of the word;—that this, in short, is a question on which the humblest piety and profoundest scholarship should be at one.

7. And this is the adjustment. The Spirit does illuminate; but He illuminates only by the word. In His office as a Revealer of truth to the mind, He tells us nothing that is out of Scripture. He only makes what is in Scripture clear and impressive to us. He addresses us in no other vocables than the vocables of the Old and New Testaments. He makes known to us no other doctrine than that which is literally and materially

to be found within the four corners of the written record. He adds nothing; He takes away nothing. It is true that He does open our understandings, but it is to understand the Scriptures. It is He, and He alone, who opens our eyes to behold wondrous things, but they are the wondrous things contained in the book of God's law. The telescope does not make the objects which are placed on a distant landscape: it only makes them visible. The Spirit does not in the act of enlightening any individual mind, make for it a new revelation of new truths; it only makes the old truths of the old revelation intelligible. By the optical instrument, it is one and the same panorama which is brought within the ken of all the different observers. And in like manner, all whom the Spirit brings out of darkness into marvellous light, are made to behold the same moral and spiritual landscape, spread out as it were on the page of revelation. In that work of the Spirit which has been so much derided and disowned, there is nought of fancy and nought of fluctuation. They are the stabilities, the unchanging and indestructible stabilities of a now fixed and finished record in which He deals. The Bible is the text-book even of His revelations—for His only revelation lies in the splendour which He sheds over the doctrines and informations of the Bible. It is not another book which He presents, but the same book, so to speak, in illuminated characters. It is thus that the Christianity of a converted Hottentot is the same with the Christianity of a converted Highlander. Each has been operated upon by the Spirit of God; but it does not thence follow that each has been made the subject of a distinct or different communication. He has furnished neither with new truths—He has only, by that urging power which is peculiarly His own, fixed and deepened and perpetuated the impression of old ones; and so the Christianity which is graven on the mental tablets of both, is but an accurate transcript of that one Christianity which was graven nearly two thousand years ago on the tablet of an outward revelation.

8. This process, this concurrent process of the Spirit and the word, and in which both are alike indispensable, may be illustrated by a variety of images; but the most instructive of these analogies is to represent it by the impression of a seal on any substance that has been submitted to it. This substance may be conceived so hard and impracticable, that with all my strength I cannot effectuate the impression. But one stronger than I may succeed in doing it; and yet he adds not one character or

one lineament to the impression that has been made. He adds nothing, he alters nothing, and what now has been stamped is the precise counterpart of what formerly has been graven. And it is just so with the written epistle of an external revelation, and those minds, those converted or Christianized minds, which the apostle designates as the living epistles of Christ Jesus our Lord. It does not lie with human eloquence, or human power, to urge adequately on any mind the truths of Christianity. But what man cannot do, the Spirit of God can do; and yet they are the very truths of Scripture which He thus impresses upon the heart—and these most appropriately and significantly conveyed in the very terms of Scripture. This view of the doctrine preserves for Scripture criticism all the worth and significancy which are ascribed to it by those who nauseate the doctrine of a spiritual influence, or put it utterly away from them. The office of the Spirit is to renew; but, to use a Bible phrase, it is to *renew in knowledge.* He makes Scripture effectual to conversion; but it is only made effectual to those who know Scripture. The doctrine of a spiritual influence from above when rightly understood, does not supersede, but would stimulate to their most intense exertion the natural faculties of those who are the seeking and the expectant subjects of this influence. It is the part of man to give earnest heed unto the Word—it is the part of God to make the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart. Still it is by the letter of the Old and New Testaments that God enlightens man; and it is with this letter that man should hold studious and unremitting converse. He should do with the Bible what he would do with some antiquated seal, which he wanted to preserve in the very condition in which it was when originally struck by the hand of him who fashioned it. Time may have shaded or effaced some of its lineaments. The corrosion of many ages may have somewhat obliterated, or even somewhat transformed the device and inscription. His labours to ascertain its primitive state, are precisely analogous to the labours of him who brings his erudite criticism to bear on the readings and the renderings of Scripture. And it goes, not to depreciate the worth of Scripture criticism, it mightily adds to its importance and its glory that the Spirit of God, acting with and by the Scripture, is the enlightener of man. The vocation of the Scripture critic is like in magnitude to the vocation of him whose office it is to keep right the instrument that is wielded by the hands of a mighty workman; and the higher

and nobler the agent is, the more momentous an interest is concerned in the right keeping of the instrument which he employs. Even in the hands of the Spirit, the changes and the corruptions of Scripture are powerless; and these changes and corruptions it is the office of Scripture criticism to clear away. It is only with what is purely and primitively Scripture that He effectually works; and the office of Scripture criticism is to present this Scripture in all its pure and primitive integrity to the eyes of the understanding.

9. I am aware that I now anticipate a theme for the complete elucidation of which I must refer you to an ulterior part of our course. Yet I am not sorry that it should have met us thus early. It affords me the opportunity of protesting at the outset against that unnatural jealousy on both sides, in virtue of which all that is lofty or arduous in the scholarship of our profession is apt to be dissevered from all that is devout and humble and childlike in its orthodoxy. I want you to exemplify both, to harmonize both. It was so done by the Fathers of the Reformation—pious and prayerful, yet withal laborious and lettered and eminently intellectual men—giants in the lore of theology—yet, save when duty called to feats of hardihood, babes in its spirit, who sat down to the lessons of Scripture with the same talent and the same modesty that Newton did to the lessons of science—who, gifted superlatively by nature, put forth all that was in them to busiest exercise; yet feeling as if all were nothing unless furthermore gifted by grace, gave themselves up to devoutest supplication. And thus did they realize that rare yet alone fruitful union in divinity—the union of hands as diligent at their taskwork as if in their own strength they could do everything, with hearts as submissively dependent on a power above them as if in themselves they could do nothing.

10. The most interesting collision upon this question that I know of between unlike men of unlike minds, was that between the most learned of our Churchmen on the one hand, Brian Walton, author or rather editor of the London Polyglot, and the most talented and zealous of our sectarians on the other, Dr. John Owen. The latter adventured himself most rashly into a combat, and under a false alarm, for the results of the erudition of the former; and the former retorted contemptuously upon his antagonist as he would upon a mystic or enthusiastic devotee. The amalgamation of the two properties, thus arrayed in hostile conflict, would have just made up a perfect theologian. It would

have been the wisdom of the letter in alliance with the wisdom of the Spirit—instead of which I know not what was most revolting—the lordly insolence of the Prelate, or the outrageous violence of the Puritan. In the first place, it was illiterate in Owen to apprehend that the integrity of the Scripture would be unsettled by the exposure, in all their magnitude and multitude, of its various readings; but in the second place, we stand in doubt of Walton's spirit and his seriousness, when he groups and characterizes as the New Light men and ranting enthusiasts of those days—those sectaries, many of whom though far behind him in the lore of theology, as consisting in the knowledge of its vocables, were as far before him in acquaintance with the subject-matter of theology, as consisting of its doctrines and of their application to the wants and the principles of our moral nature. The way to adjust this difference is not, as is common in the management of extremes, to avoid both. In the present instance, certainly it is to compound both—the philology, and the research, and the classic or antiquarian attainments of the one, with the faith, and the ardour, and the profound intelligence, if not in the words, at least in the substance of the Divine testimony, which still more illustriously signalized the other.

11. It will enable me, with all the greater comfort and safety, to recommend the productions of another distinguished labourer in the walk of Scripture criticism, if I forewarn you of that unhallowed contempt for the doctrine of a spiritual and supernatural influence by which he is actuated. I mean the younger Michaelis—in whose chapter on the various readings of the New Testament you will perhaps find the soundest and most instructive lessons upon this subject to be met with anywhere; but against whose disdainful coldness, or rather whose passionate and deep-rooted antipathy to spiritual religion, you need to be guarded. The most profound acquaintance with the letter of Scripture, even though carried to its minutest, and before undiscovered, niceties, is no guarantee whatever for the respect in which we hold those great and momentous doctrines which are accessible to all, and the property of all; and thus our veneration for an accomplished philologist and critic may invest with most dangerous authority his contemptuous allusion to such articles of faith as enter into the very life and substance of the New Testament. It is not therefore without a certain measure of painful apprehension that I ask the student of theology to peruse Michaelis's "Introduction to the New Testament," fearful

as I am that, while under his tuition you make rapid advances in the wisdom of the letter, you may insensibly imbibe his own feeling, the general feeling of the Biblists in Germany—that the wisdom of the Spirit is foolishness. What so unequivocal a demonstration of this, for example, as, when deriding the pretension of illiterate Christians to the Holy Ghost, he gives it as his own experience, that he never felt any special influence from the Holy Ghost during the whole of his life? And shall a doctrine, which stands forth so broadly and conspicuously in almost every page, be sacrificed to an authority, earned upon no other ground than that, in virtue of pursuing Scripture criticism into its minuter ramifications, he holds more intelligent converse than most other men, with matters not to be despised, for all Scripture is profitable, but still with matters which, when compared in worth and magnitude with the doctrine in question, are but the *difficiles nugæ* of the New Testament? We shall presently show how it is that the most important truths of Christianity should be the most obvious, and how, generally speaking, they are the least useful things in the system of Divine truth, which either occur so rarely, or are situated so reconditely among the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα of Scripture, as to call for the application of Scripture criticism in its utmost skill and utmost strenuousness. It is an accomplishment, therefore, which has its own value; but be assured of a subtle delusion, of a distorted and disproportionate view of things, if it be thought that in virtue of having this accomplishment, we are either better qualified to pronounce, or still more, are entitled because of it to pour off our obloquy and scorn on the leading articles of the faith.

12. There were a twofold advantage in a correct understanding of the Spirit's operation, as an operation mainly carried into effect by the force and clearness which He imparted to the word. It might, in the first instance, reconcile pious though unlettered Christians to Scripture criticism; and in the second, might reconcile our philologists and mere eruditionists of the Bible to the doctrine of a spiritual influence. We have no doubt of this influence having been wholly misunderstood by Michaelis—that he imagined of it as something apart from Scripture, instead of its sole function being to impress the meaning and sentiment of Scripture with prevailing energy upon the mind; that he fancied an *afflatus*, or a vision, or a direct inspiration from the Holy Spirit, making revelation of new things rather than unveiling from obscurity, or giving animation and effect to the very revel-

ations of the Bible. The reality of such an influence has the strongest of all evidence to rest upon—the recollection of what we originally were, and the consciousness of what we subsequently are, when visited therewith—that wide moral contrast so discernible by every awakened spirit, between the habit of him who is all insensible to God, and of him whose hourly and perpetual reference is to the Being with whom we have to do; of him who lightly esteems the Saviour, and him whose aim it is to do all things whatsoever in the name of Jesus; of him whose only fellowship is with the things of sense and of time, and him who is ever looking ahead of death to the realities of the eternal world beyond it. To the man who has actually undergone such a change, its reality is much too palpable to suffer obscuration from the wholly misplaced and inapplicable learning which is gathered on the byways of criticism. There is nothing whatever in the calling of these philologists which rightfully invests them with any such authority. Should a man, by dint of painful comparison among manuscripts, succeed in restoring some faded or mutilated letter, would the *éclat* of such a discovery entitle him to expunge the whole authentic and undeniable sentence to which it belongs? Yet his right would be fully as good, and earned too in the very same way as that of Michaelis, or any the most profound and laborious Biblist in Germany, to cast disparagement on those great truths which have the firm basis both of experience and Scripture to rest upon.

13. There is much of philosophy as well as of admirable *naïveté* and tact in the sayings of that plain Christian, John Newton of London. I think he has hit the precise relation in which Bible philologists and collators stand to us, when he denominates them the Gibeonites of the Christian Church, the hewers of wood and drawers of water to the children of Israel.

14. After having got over this preliminary barrier in the way of Scripture criticism, we hold it as a sure and irresistible position, that it must just be conducted on the same principles and by the same methods with the criticism of all other ancient authorship. To determine the genuine readings of any book in the New Testament, you must proceed on the very indications which guide you to the genuine readings of Horace or Cicero. And to determine the sense of any Scripture passage, you employ the very instruments which are wielded by linguists and grammarians when they try to penetrate the meaning of any obscure

or controverted sentence in the poets or the historians or the sages of Greece and Rome. This investigation is similarly conducted in profane and sacred literature; and the same philology, the same erudite acquaintance with the lights of contemporaneous history, the same skilfulness in the usages and analogies of speech, whether founded on the comparison of an author with himself, or on the comparison of him with all that has survived of the language in which he wrote, are applicable to the elucidation of both. It matters not whether it be a classical or a Christian, and even inspired composition. When you sit in judgment, be it on the integrity of the text, or on the sense of it—both should receive the like treatment at your hands. There is nothing in what we have said of the spiritual sense or impression of Scripture that should at all affect the methods of your investigation into the literal sense; for always remember that the spiritual quadrates at all points with the literal, and that it is through the knowledge of the one that the light and life of the other are conveyed to you. On this subject it were well to ponder the sentiment of Chrysostom, who has been termed the father of all legitimate interpretation. He thought, and most justly, I apprehend, that the only sure means of arriving at the genuine interpretation of Scripture is, first to ascertain the literal, grammatical, and historical sense, since on that alone can be founded the moral, doctrinal, spiritual, or mystical—though the latter is not unfrequently the more important sense, and sometimes the only true one.

15. We quite agree, then, with all the actual scholars in this department of literature, that in the treatment of Scripture we should follow the very same methods which the interpreters not only of the sacred books, but also of the classical authors, have reckoned to be the certain, legitimate, and only true methods worthy of a man of erudition—even that which is called the grammatical. There is nothing in this concession which does not leave to the office of the Spirit, as an enlightener, all the importance and significancy it ever had. It just affords one exemplification more of a principle that runs through the whole of theology, whenever the Divine and the human agency meet together for the production of a given effect—in which case there is a grievous misunderstanding should the Divine be thought to supersede the human; instead of which, the one should stimulate the other to its uttermost. Were I made to know that Scripture produced its full effect upon the heart through the

medium of the natural intellect, then I would just have the same reason for bringing all my natural faculties into busy converse with this volume, as in the works of ordinary authorship; but if, instead of this, I were made to know that Scripture did not work its full effect save by the intervention of a mighty and unseen agent, who responded to my prayers and brought home the power and truth of the word with energy to my bosom, *but through the medium of the natural faculties*—then, so far from dispensing with these, it heightens every inducement which men had before for bringing the intellect and the Scripture into contact with each other. I should like that this were pondered by you in the proportion of its importance. If barely told that the letter of the word was not sufficient for being made wise unto salvation, but that the Spirit was indispensable, I can imagine a laxer attention to the Bible in consequence; but if further told that by this letter, and by it alone, the Spirit operates in the revealing of truth to the mind, that call upon our attention to the Bible becomes as urgent—or rather, if rightly considered, more urgent than before. My veneration for the instrument and my sense of its importance are all the more heightened the more that I am told of the power and dignity of that agent by whom it is used. The Bible is the instrument—the Spirit is the agent. The Bible is the seal—the Spirit is He by whose strength alone the impression of its characters can be made on the else impervious and impracticable heart of man. I should feel no heart for the task of restoring its faded and worn lineaments, did I know that there was no power on earth that could effectually impress it on the subject to which it was applied, and were I ignorant of any other power. But when made to know of such a power in heaven, the office of labouring to restore the device upon the seal to what it originally was, becomes a significant and hopeful one;—in other words, the doctrine of the Spirit rightly understood, so far from superseding criticism, gives an impulse to its labours. Did the Spirit act by any other channel, we could understand the neglect and indifference of Christians towards the scholarship of the Bible; but, on the other hand, the fact of this book being the tangible mean of conveyance between the Spirit of God and the soul of man, supplies the strongest conceivable motive for the cultivation of this scholarship. The Bible is the common subject wherewith the Spirit of God and the spirit of man have severally to do. It invests the part which man has in it with all the more sacred

and awful importance, that when acquitting himself thereof he acts as a fellow-worker with God.

16. But let us have done with all these preliminary topics, and now entertain for a little the subject of Scripture criticism itself.

17. In regard to emendatory criticism, I refer you to the ordinary books on the subject of the various readings; and of the rules by which you may elicit from their comparison the genuine or original words of any passage which is differently presented to us by the manuscripts and versions now in existence. Let me now only advert to the vivid alarm which was at one time felt in consequence of the discoveries made upon this walk of criticism. When Mill announced his thirty thousand various readings, there was a general apprehension for the integrity of Scripture. Many excellent Christians had the feeling that all was now fearfully unsettled, and that they were to be left without a Bible. Some, as we have seen, even of our most able and intelligent theologians, joined in this illiterate resistance to a fact which rested on the most palpable experience. They held the Scripture to be alike incorrupt and incorruptible, and in defence of its integrity, alleged the providence of God. Such an outcry, raised in the face of positive observation, brought great discredit on the cause of piety. It was viewed as a collision between the scholars and the saints, in which the former had all the advantage, and so proved one of those occasions by which men were led to associate serious religion on the one hand, with drivelling and contemptible weakness upon the other. It tended to divorce more widely the science of our profession from its sacredness—making the one party more suspicious of learning, and the other, in the pride of its conscious possession, greatly more overbearing than before; yet, after all, it turned out to be a bugbear; and the following important and gratifying testimonies from the critics themselves, naturally inclined as they must have been to magnify their own office, must be held worthy of the most implicit confidence upon this question.

18. Walton, who inflicted such severe chastisement on the impugners of his Polyglot, and whom he denominates the ranting enthusiasts of the day, depones as follows:—"The different readings out of translations are of the same nature with those gathered out of original copies—that is, they are only in lesser matters, not in things of any moment or concernment; they are such whereby our faith and salvation are noway endangered."

—Todd's "Life of Walton," vol. ii. p. 160. He allows in his Prolegomena, that they contain nothing repugnant to the analogy of faith; and presents us there with the following extract from Bochartus:—"Num multo aliter invigilavit Dei Providentia, ut sacræ Scripturæ codices præstaret immunes, saltem in iis quæ ad fidem et salutem sunt absolute necessaria. Unde est quod ut Hebræi et Græci codices variant in minutulis, et sacri textus interpretes sæpe in diversa abeunt, tamen in fidei capitibus et τοῦ νόμου βαρυτέροις eadem ubique doctrina occurrat, non jam dicam in αὐτογράφοις, sed et in versionibus corruptissimis." Walton further affirms of some various readings, which may seem to have been made to serve the particular purposes of a party, "that yet not any one article of faith, any doctrine or duty, any promise or threatening, has been affected thereby, or rendered precarious by any various reading or corruption."—Todd's "Life of Walton," vol. ii. p. 326. In his Prolegomena he gives us the following sententious deliverance of Buxtorff on the various readings:—"Versantur enim potius circa ὀρθογραφίαν quam circa ὀρθοδοξίαν." Gerard, author of the "Institutes of Biblical Criticism," presents us with the following testimony:—"When all the copies of the original, and all the versions, agree in a reading, it is certainly the true one; and as that is in general the case, we have absolute assurance of the authenticity and purity of the Scriptures in general—greater assurance than with regard to any other book whatever." We shall conclude these quotations by the following extracts from Marsh's Michaelis's "Introduction to the New Testament," vol. i. pp. 266, 267, fourth edition:—"It is not to be doubted that some of the various readings affect doctrines as well as words, and without caution might produce error; but these are so few that not one of them has been selected by the reformers of the present age as the basis of a new doctrine." On this subject it is of extreme importance to observe, that though a reading should be expunged which embodies in it some capital doctrine, it follows not that the doctrine itself should be expunged. An article is not to be cancelled from the creed merely because critics have demonstrated that one of its proof-passages ought to be cancelled from the record. The following is a most satisfactory intimation by Michaelis to this effect:—"It is true, that the number of proof-passages in support of certain doctrines have been diminished by our knowledge of the various readings. We are certain, for instance, that 1 John v. 7 is a spurious passage, but

the doctrine contained in it is not therefore changed, since it is delivered in other parts of the New Testament. After the most diligent inquiry, especially by those who would banish the divinity of Christ from the articles of our religion, not a single various reading has been discovered in the two principal passages, John i. 1,* and Romans ix. 5; and this very doctrine, instead of being shaken by the collections of Mill and Wetstein, has been rendered more certain than ever. This is so strongly felt by the modern reformers in Germany, that they begin to think less favourably of that species of criticism which they at first so highly recommended, in the hope of its leading to discoveries more suitable to their maxims than the ancient system." —"The most important readings which make an alteration in the sense, relate in general to subjects that have no connexion with articles of faith, of which the Cambridge Manuscript, that differs more than any other from the common text, affords sufficient proof."—"By far the greatest number relate to trifles, and make no alteration in the sense, such as καγὼ for καὶ ἐγὼ, ἐλάττων for ἐλάσσων, Κύριος for Θεὸς, which in most cases may be used indifferently."—Vol. i. pp. 266, 267. This, then, is a fine example of the perfect safety wherewith science might be permitted to take its utmost range over the field of theology. We have nothing to apprehend from any variations which have been soundly established between the original Scriptures and our present editions of the Greek New Testament. And what is true of emendatory is also true of interpretative criticism—insomuch that all the labours of all the philologists have been unable to tarnish the character of our own authorized version as a competent directory of faith and practice to Christians.

19. But before proceeding to this latter subject, it is but fair that we should present the following extract from Michaelis, observing first, however, that he was very much inclined to exaggerate the helplessness of those theologians, even in regard to the essential subject-matter of their profession, who were not thoroughly accomplished for critical and philological inquiries. "If it be asked," he says, "whether these collections, and especially those of Ralph and Kypke, have essentially contributed to explain the New Testament, I hesitate not a moment to pronounce in the affirmative. Ernesti, unquestionably a master of the Greek language, and celebrated in the republic of

* One variation has since been discovered in the reading of this verse, but in a MS. of slender authority.

letters, entertains a different opinion; but on what grounds he supports that opinion I have never been able to discover. He says that Elsner, the best of the critics, has hardly ten remarks of any consequence. Now ten remarks that render intelligible ten passages of the New Testament, which were before obscure, are not to be rejected with contempt; and if every critic contributed in the same proportion, we should make no inconsiderable progress in exegetical knowledge. But it seems extraordinary that Ernesti should have mentioned Elsner in particular, and not Raphel, who had taken the lead in this kind of literature, and given a philological explanation of many more than ten passages, which before his time had appeared inexplicable."—Marsh's Michaelis, vol. i. p. 186. Now in reference to these ten or more important passages, you will observe that Michaelis and others often speak of important readings, which yet affect none of the principles of Christianity, whether doctrinal or moral, although they may change our notions of some historical facts, elucidate a narrative that was before ill understood, or dissipate the obscurity which hangs over some practice or observation of ancient times. Now what is true of important readings may also be true of important renderings. They may cast a new light on some certain places, respecting what we were in error or difficulty before; they may even diminish the number of proofs for certain articles of our faith; and yet these articles, and indeed the whole system of the gospel, both in regard to its *credenda* and *agenda*, may be quite unchanged by it. The few extracts already given suffice for the establishment of this truly comfortable affirmation, both as it regards the readings and the renderings of Scripture. The following brief sentence from Walton is abundantly decisive of the latter, where he speaks of "the wonderful consent of all translations in all things of moment, though made at different times, and in several nations."—Todd's "Life of Walton," vol. ii. p. 92.

20. It should be remarked, however, that notwithstanding the actual stability and safety of Christian doctrine under all those changes which have taken place by the carelessness or involuntary mistake of transcribers and translators, the same cannot be looked for in those cases where, extensively and systematically, there has been wilful corruption, and that to serve the purposes of a party—such as the improved English version of the New Testament by the Unitarians; and perhaps, though in a much less degree, one or two of the Catholic versions of

Scripture. It is wonderful enough that in every honest translation the misreadings and misinterpretings should have affected the subject-matter of the Bible so little, and the subject-matter of the religion of the Bible, as made up of things to be believed and things to be practised, not at all. This certainly is a phenomenon which deserves to be accounted for; and the explanation, we are persuaded, might serve to throw light both on the objects and the methods of Scripture criticism.

21. But before proceeding to this, let us observe, in reference to Michaelis's hypothesis of each future critic giving important elucidation to ten passages, that when speaking of scriptural discoveries, they are of two distinct sorts, which ought not to be confounded. There may, in the first instance, be new discoveries made in regard to the meaning of words and sentences, as they stand in the Bible, so as to improve our translation, and bring the sense of it indefinitely nearer to the real sense of the original: such discoveries fall within the province of the Scripture critic. Or, in the second instance, there may be the discovery of new relations, either between one statement and another of the Bible, or between the statements of the Bible and the state of human nature. This kind of discovery falls within the province of the theologian; and there would have just been the same room for it that there is at present, although the Hellenistic Greek had been our vernacular tongue, or the revelation had been made to us in our present English language; in other words, though the labours and lucubrations of philology had been altogether uncalled for. The one kind of discovery is called for because of the diversity which obtains between the original languages of revelation and the language of our own country; and its object is to make the sense or subject-matter of the translated, as near as possible to the sense or subject-matter of the original book. The other kind of discovery is called for by the yet unobserved relations that obtain between the various parts of this subject-matter, or the yet unmade applications of it to the state and condition of humanity. Now while on the latter ground, there is room for indefinite novelty and for endless illustration, so as to liken in this respect the study of the word of God to the study of His works; on the former ground, the field of discovery is every day becoming sensibly narrower than before. At the rate of ten important passages for each critic, they would at length be all overtaken, when the next labourer in the field would behove to sheathe his sword for lack of argument. Or, to speak

more correctly, he would, in the number and exceeding nicety of minuter things, find interminable scope for the exercise of his vocation. He might turn him, for example, to the question of the meaning which should be attached to the word πιστικὸς, that characterizes in some uncertain way the spikenard poured by the woman on the head of Jesus; or to the word συντρίψασα, which leaves it still undetermined whether she brake or simply opened the box that held it. (Mark xiv. 3.) The labour of centuries will not finish these investigations. Time may run indefinitely on, as does an asymptote, and yet the absolute similarity of a version to the original may never be attained—though like as the asymptote to its hyperbola there may constant and successive approaches be making towards it. There will always be some minute and microscopic, though ever lessening distance from perfection; and room, therefore, to the end of the world, for the exercise of a philology all the more refined and arduous, as it comes nearer to that point which it shall never overtake: yet who does not see that just in proportion to this excess of labour and exquisiteness of skill, will be the insignificance of its results? In proportion to the greatness of its power, will be the smallness of its products. And meanwhile though an infinity of marvellous achievements by criticism remain to be performed, the materials of theology, whether for being philosophized into a system, or constructed into a directory of life and conduct, are already in our hands.

22. But it is now time to enter on our proposed explanation. Interpretative criticism may be conceived of as having three distinct objects: first, to ascertain the meaning of single words or phrases, when the inquiry or the exercise might be called a philological one; second, to ascertain the scope and meaning of a passage, when to distinguish it from the former, we should say that we were now engaged in a contextual investigation; and third, to verify or ascertain the articles of the Christian faith, when it becomes what may be termed a doctrinal inquiry. We do not say of these three, the philological, the contextual, the doctrinal, that practically they stand apart from each other. In the act of determining the meaning, whether of a passage or the nature and truth of a doctrine, we shall find that these hinge on the meaning of particular words, and that we must have recourse to the philological. On the other hand, in fixing the sense of a particular term or phrase, we have often to borrow light from the adjoining sentences wherewith it stands in connexion, or

even fetch it from the greater distances of a still wider and more comprehensive survey, as when we found our conclusion on the analogy of the faith, and thus call in the aid both of the contextual and the doctrinal. So far from questioning the mutual dependence of these several parts, it is the very topic or contemplation on which we at present mean to dwell, and that because of certain most important conclusions which we think might be legitimately grounded thereupon.

23. In every book of moral or doctrinal instruction, it is natural to expect that the most important truth will be the most pervading—that just in proportion to its value will be the frequency of its recurrence, or the number of passages wherewith either by direct avowal, or by implication and allusion, it is in any way interwoven. This, which holds true of such a work even by a single author, must be realized still more surely, and to a much greater extent, if the work be made up of contributions from many authors, all related to each other by the tie of one common discipleship, and all more or less the expounders of one great and peculiar system. In each separate piece we may expect to meet with the leading principles of that system; and in very proportion to the weight and magnitude of the truth, will be the diffusion of it throughout the volume. Now this is pre-eminently the character of Scripture, that it is the composition of many hands, and therefore may we confidently look for all that is essential in the doctrine of Scripture, as being the theme, direct or occasional, of very many of its passages.

24. Now I would have you attend to the advantage which this unity or this harmony of subjects gives to a translator in the interpretation of these passages. Each confirms or reflects illustration upon the other. The light is multiplied as if by reflection among kindred places; and when the apparent sense in one is re-echoed by a like apparent sense in all the rest, it forms into a crowd of testimonies in behalf of the obvious interpretation. This principle is abundantly recognised in the common rules which are delivered by critics for the interpretation of Scripture. Gerard says, "that the clear meaning of a phrase in any part of Scripture, is great authority for determining its sense in any other part; but the usage of it in any one author is the greatest authority for fixing its sense as elsewhere used by the same author; for in one writer a greater similarity of style may be expected than in different writers," p. 154. He elsewhere observes, that "no doctrine can belong to the analogy of faith,

which is founded on a single text, for every essential principle of religion is delivered in more than one place," p. 160. To the same effect we are told in Stuart's Ernesti, that "a student can never feel too deeply the importance of a thorough comparison of all those parts of Scripture which pertain to the same subject;" and that "this comparison has more force in illustrating the New Testament than in the illustration of either Greek or Latin authors."—"To all who admit," we are further told, "that the same Holy Spirit guided the authors of the New Testament, and that their views of religion in consequence of this must have been *harmonious*, the inducement to the comparison of various parts and passages with each other, in order to obtain a correct view of the whole, must be *very great;* and the additional force of the evidence arising from comparison, on account of the really harmonious views of the writers, must make this exercise the imperious duty of every theologian."

25. It is thus that when an important doctrine occurs in any part of Scripture, there is so much help for a right translation of it to be derived from other parts of Scripture. These, in fact, are the occasions when a rare and recondite philology is least needed and least called for; or the occasions upon which a translator, even of inferior skill and accomplishment, is the least likely to go astray. You will thus perceive that our security for a right translation is the greatest, when it is of most importance that it should; and you will also perceive how it is that even in the most slovenly and careless of its versions, all the essential truths of the Bible are conveyed to us. This surely should be felt as a blissful conclusion, and which all who take an interest in the religion of the world ought to rejoice in, that even by hands which are not the most practised or the most skilful, the essential aliment of the soul might be served up to all the nations that are upon the face of the earth. It is not that we would willingly dispense with the most consummate scholarship which is to be found for the execution of all Scripture translations: we simply make an averment, which if true is most important in itself, and for the truth of which the most consummate scholars who ever laboured in the service of the Church have given us their testimony. "Tamen," says Bochartus, "in fidei capitibus, et τοῦ νόμου τοῖς βαρυτέροις, eadem doctrina, ubique occurrit, non jam dicam in αὐτογράφοις sed et in versionibus corruptissimis." This sentence is quoted with approbation by Grotius, that great Goliath of literature, and is in

perfect accordance indeed with the approbation of all honest critics and grammarians, who have remarked as a thing of general notoriety, "the wonderful consent of all translations in all things of moment, though made at several times and in several nations." Or to express it in the language of Gerard, in his Institutes of Biblical Criticism, "there is scarcely any version which does not express the sense of Scripture, as far as it is absolutely necessary to be known by those who have no other means of learning it."

26. So much at present for the doctrinal. The contextual stands distinguished from the doctrinal in this, that its object is not to ascertain or find support for an article of faith; and from the philological in this, that its object is not to fix the meaning of a word or a phrase, but the meaning of a sentence or the meaning of a passage. It gathers light and evidence for its interpretations from a narrower field than the doctrinal; and in certain instances from a wider field than the philological. In the doctrinal, we are often able to plead the consent of testimonies that lie scattered over the whole compass of the record. But in the contextual, the light which is made to fall upon the text is taken chiefly from the context. In the former, the text is shone upon, from many and distinct places, all over the volume. In the latter, the text is shone upon chiefly from the context. It is this doctrinal light in the one case, and this contextual light in the other, which clears up the meaning in so very many instances, without the aid of any very elaborate philology. The harmony of the whole volume bears evidence to the first sort of interpretations. The harmony of a whole passage bears evidence to the second; and thus it is that in almost every version of Scripture, even those which have been executed by the moderately learned, the essential doctrines have all been accurately rendered, and the scope and substantial meaning of each continuous passage has been accurately given.

27. We now pass on to the philological; and we have first to observe, that here also a reflex and multiple light, drawn from a wide field of comparison, can be made to fall on the import of words and phrases. With vocables of frequent recurrence, and expressions of frequent recurrence, the work of translation is easy. The truth is, that for the meaning of common words and phrases, we have far more *abundant* evidence than for the truth of the commonest doctrines, whether in science or theology—as being of vastly more frequent recurrence, because used upon all

subjects, and not restricted to any one in particular. Hence it is that nothing can exceed the justness or the importance of the following statement by Ernesti :—"Scripture cannot be studied theologically until it is studied grammatically," p. 42. "Interpretation should rather be grammatical than doctrinal. In comparing reasons for the exegesis of particular passages, greater weight should be attributed to grammatical than doctrinal ones. A thing may be altogether true in doctrine which yet is not taught by some particular passages. Books of theology exhibit many doctrinal interpretations, consentaneous indeed with Christian principles, but not deduced from the words interpreted; *doctrinally* true, but not *grammatically*." A doctrine which is frequently stated in Scripture, will not always, will not generally, be stated in phraseology of rare occurrence, and therefore of difficult comprehension. The very principle which dictates the frequent, will also dictate the perspicuous mention of it; so that the grammatical trueness may be quite obvious, and thus carry a full and immediate conviction in its doctrinal trueness. It is unquestionable that our perception of the grammatical must precede our perception of the doctrinal trueness; or in other words, that philology is the basis of our theology. This is quite true, but it is just as true that all which is most important in theology rests on the basis of an obvious philology, and that when the services of an arduous and recondite philology are required for the purposes of discovery, that discovery relates to a matter of inferior consequence. Though therefore the term philological has been restricted by us to the third branch of interpretation, it is not because the whole business of interpretation is not a work of philology. But in the two first branches, this philology is aided by such an amount of consentaneous light from other parts of the volume, as to make it a competent work even for a less skilful and accomplished linguist—whereas in the last branch, philology, abandoned by the lights which shine upon the other two, is put upon her extreme resources for the solution of her extreme difficulties.

28. It is when the words and phrases in the original are rare or anomalous, or, most of all, unexampled, that the work of translation becomes so critically arduous. What have been called the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα of Scripture, whether consisting of single words, or of several words combined into a phrase, are far the most trying to the philological skill of those who grapple with them. For want of other Scripture wherewith to compare them, ana-

logies must be sought for from other quarters. The whole round of Greek and Hebrew literature may need to be travelled through. Perhaps the scholar who has spent a whole life in accumulating the treasures of classic and rabbinical lore, is the only one adequately furnished for the solution of some else impracticable text, which owns no community with, and therefore can derive no illustration from, any of its fellows. Perhaps the incidental expression of some rarely consulted author—perhaps the discovery of some local and ancient custom before unnoticed or unknown—may shed a pleasing radiance over some scriptural enigma that had withstood the research and ingenuity of ages. Nothing certainly can be more delightful than the triumph of such an *éclaircissement;* but I put it to your own judgment to say, whether that singularity of character to which all its difficulty was owing, does not form the strongest presumption against the doctrinal or practical importance of it? Is it in such a rare or hardly accessible situation as this, that you would expect to meet with any of the great generalities of Christian truth; or rather, like the cheap and common bounties of nature, will they not both be so placed and so disseminated, that the eye might easily see, and the hand might readily apprehend them? The affirmation may startle you, yet nevertheless I confidently make it. When for the elucidation of any text, philology needs to be put upon her extreme resources, that text is in theology what *nugæ difficiles* are in science. It occupies the same place in the system of nature that a *lusus naturæ* does in the system of the universe.

29. My object, as you will find presently, is not to depreciate the importance of your philological studies; but it is to reduce a certain exaggerated imagination, which has of late begun to prevail in Scotland, respecting the amount and value of those hidden treasures that are yet to be found by our deeper insight into the original languages. The truth is, that we are behind our neighbours in the South, and still more behind the Biblists in Germany, not in all the branches certainly, but in the philological branch of Scripture criticism; and visited as we have recently been by a consciousness of this, we, in strict accordance with the maxim that ignorance is the mother of devotion, conceive most extravagantly of the pretensions and the powers of this unpractised instrument, as if it were to unlock a thousand mysteries; and as if, by the operation of a talisman, it were mightily to renovate and enlarge the theology of our land. On

the strength of the principles which we have just now tried to expound, we venture to predict that these anticipations will not be realized. Even though we are wholly incapable of following the processes of this philological criticism, we have only to look at the results of it, in order to assure ourselves that whatever its achievements may be in things which are minute, they will be but few and trivial in things which are momentous. As an experimental proof of this, we bid you compare the translation of the four Gospels by Dr. Campbell with that in our authorized version, and then estimate the whole doctrinal amount of the difference that is between them. Or, more decisive still, take the *Recensio Synoptica* of Bloomfield, extending to the whole of the New Testament; and, after adopting all his emendations, then say, whether it would not remain essentially the same Bible with that which is read in our parish schools, and is placed on the shelves of our unlettered peasantry. Yet he professes to have traversed the whole length and breadth of this literature; and we rejoice so to understand it. It palpably demonstrates how entire the transfusion is of the substance of divine truth into the popular version of our own land; and we may safely add, with very rare exceptions, into all the popular versions of Christendom. It shows that there are a force and an obviousness in the doctrines of revelation, in virtue of which, without the guidance of the most consummate skill, they do find an effective conveyance across the barrier of diverse tongues, so as with their change of dress to remain the same in sentiment and in staple as before. Humbling it may be to the overweening pretensions of philology; but this is nobly compensated by the thought that even the uninitiated in its mysteries, who compose the great bulk of our population, have access to those higher mysteries to which the former stand but in the relation of subserviency—that placed at a distance from the fountainhead of inspired truth, they nevertheless may one and all of them drink so purely and so plentifully from its streams—that the doctrines and informations of Scripture are mainly in their possession; and though to their eye there hangs a hieroglyphic veil over the original terms of God's communication, that yet in reference to its enduring truths the veil is drawn aside, and all its best treasures, all its highest glories are their own.

30. We repeat that it is far, very far, from our purpose, to depreciate the cause of a sound and thorough philological education for students of divinity, but we would have them look

intelligently to this as to everything else connected with their profession; and there is a pedantry to which our own country stands at this moment peculiarly exposed, and which really needs to be put down. The truth is, that we are under process of recovery from a state of comparative depression as to classical literature; and it is unavoidable that some should outstrip the rest in this ascending movement to a higher and a better proficiency in the languages. Now, it is most natural, though still but natural vanity, for man to magnify the power of his own acquisitions, and that just in proportion to their difficulty and rareness; and so, if at all versant in the philology of Scripture, he is apt to imagine that he alone holds the cipher by which to evolve upon the world the mysteries of an else hidden and impracticable region. Now, while it is quite palpable that to philology, more or less, we owe the existence of all the versions of Scripture, and many of the lucubrations of criticism, it is nevertheless true, that a mere philological divine, accomplished though he be for grappling with the most arduous texts in the Old and New Testaments, may yet, instead of a philosopher, be a mere virtuoso in the science of theology. He may have appropriated the meaning of many, and these the most difficult of its individual sayings, and yet its great principles, the harmony of its truths, and their marvellous adaptations to the mechanism of human nature, may all be unknown to him. He may just be in our science what the dilettante collector of rare and curious specimens is in natural history—the triumphant owner of its anomalies and its wonders, and yet in utter ignorance of those classifications or comprehensive arrangements by which alone we can systematize nature, or group its mighty host of individual objects into families. The analyst of a curious text may learn as little from it of the economy or administration of the spiritual heavens, as the analyst of a meteoric stone, of the economy of those material heavens from which it has fallen. The one may be as little a theologian as the other an astronomer. For instance, he may unravel the expression of *βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν*, and bring to light the yet undecided meaning of the apostle, when he speaks of those who were baptized for the dead; or he may discover in his researches who the *ἄγγελοι* were of the primitive churches, and so explain to us why the women should wear long hair because of the angels; or he may settle that sorely controverted text of Matt. xxvii. 5, on which more has been written, to the amount of whole volumes, than

on any other verse of the Bible; and this, by the way, is our best example of a mighty addition in bulk to the Scripture criticism of theology, without any addition in weight or in principle to the science of it—its sole object being to fix the sense of the word ἀπήγξατο, and so to ascertain the precise kind of death that Judas underwent—whether by mental agony, or by hanging, or by a fall in virtue of the insufficient rope wherewith he was suspended. Now, I am not indifferent to any of these solutions. I desiderate them all; and should esteem it an honourable distinction for our Church, that she harboured within her confines the scholar that could accomplish them. Yet though he accomplished these, and a hundred such solutions, and so justly earned the credit of being a profound philologist, there needs something more and something else ere he shall earn the further and the higher credit of being a profound theologian.

31. And what, we have sometimes thought, would have become of these pretenders to theology had we all been born under the misfortune of having the Hellenistic Greek for our vernacular tongue, or had we spoken from childhood in the very words and idioms of the New Testament? The greater part of our present philological criticism would have been uncalled for, and its enamoured adepts would have been sadly abridged in their favourite exercise. It is true, we should have advanced one step nearer to the subject-matter of theology; but to hear those who talk of acquaintance with the original languages as all in all, we should have altogether lost the science of it. Be assured that at this rate, things are taken in an inverse order. The study of words is prior in time, but surely not in importance to the study of things, seeing that to the latter it stands altogether in the relation of subserviency. The science of theology does not end with the task of the philologist: it only begins there. Philology does not present us with the science: at the very best, it furnishes but the raw materials of the science. And not he who but holds converse with the terms, but he who holds converse with the truths which are conveyed by them, he it is who is really the theologian.

32. To sum up these observations. I have first endeavoured to make it palpable to you, that what is most important in the volume, is also in general most pervading; and that thus there is least danger of missing the sense in those passages where the subject-matter is of the most vital consequence. It is thus that—

I will not say in our most corrupt, but in our most careless and illiterate, if only honest, versions—all the *capita fidei*, the main and leading articles of Christianity are to be found; so that even by hands neither the most skilful nor the most practised, translations have been executed, which, with all their defects, have been the instruments of upholding the faith and religious knowledge of the nations of Christendom. But secondly, what is true of the doctrinal, is true also, though in a less degree, of the contextual—in the one, there being for our guidance the harmony of a whole work; in the other, the harmony of a whole passage. In virtue of this contextual light, not only are the great truths of Christianity accurately rendered in all our popular versions, but seldom does it occur that the scope or general purport of any lengthened passage is inaccurately given. When is it then that philology is put on its uttermost resources, and its most accomplished adepts and disciples are called upon for the highest exercise of their skill? It is when, abandoned by the lights both of the doctrinal and the contextual, some isolated sentence stands unsupported and alone, without the aid or the countenance of any kindred Scripture whatever. Hence it is, that when the meaning of a passage requires the most strenuous efforts of philology, then it is that its services are of the least practical importance; that the one, in fact, stands in an inverse proportion to the other; and so we come to the conclusion, that a mere philological divine overrates exceedingly the importance of his instrument, when he thinks that by it he is to unlock such treasures as shall mightily enrich and enlarge the theology of our land; that philology still remains to us an instrument of discovery in things that are minute, but is not an instrument of discovery in things that are momentous.

33. I trust you now perceive the consistency of these two positions; first, the importance of Scripture criticism looked to generally, as without it there could have been no interpretation at all of the sacred writings, and so no access to the mind and will of God as expressed by revelation from heaven. But secondly, the unimportance of those more arduous results which are furnished by an extreme and elaborate philology. To deny the former, were just to deny the importance of all sacred knowledge. This therefore must be conceded; and yet it may be just as true, that there is little of real substantive value, whether doctrinally or practically, in any of those discoveries which are evolved by the higher, or rather the more difficult and strenuous

efforts of Scripture criticism. The easier work of a translator may bring into our possession all that is momentous, or which enters into the theological system—though it may leave much that is minute, which is also curious and interesting, still unsettled and still unappropriated. The mistake lies in not making the distinction between that criticism which is the higher in point of importance, though the lower in point of accomplishment; and that criticism which is the higher in point of accomplishment, though in point of importance it adds little or nothing to those achievements which the humbler and homelier instrument already has performed. It is the announcement so oft repeated by Michaelis and others, as if Scripture criticism, in the very highest style of it, were essential to the formation of an intelligent theologian, which I think so fitted to do mischief. It gives the impression of certain lofty and recondite mysteries in theology to which they alone have access, and no others. It tends to cast a certain hieroglyphical obscurity over the science, and to make the multitude feel as if at a fearful and impracticable distance from its revelations. We are not sure, but that under the guise of learning, it would go to establish a monopoly and a despotism as hurtful to the species as that which has already been wielded under the tyranny of an odious superstition. Whatever, in fact, is of higher pretence than it is of performance, becomes to the credulous and the weak an object of superstitious veneration. It is thus that a dangerous authority may be claimed and exercised by him whom the world looks up to as an adept in Scripture criticism, as if the instrument in his possession were a magician's wand, by which he could charm a new theology into being, or lay dishonour on the whole of our existing theology. At this rate, to all but the initiated in the deeper secrets of philology, revealed truth would be put into a state of precariousness; and to save the Church at large this painful feeling of insecurity, it is of importance to show that there is a stable scriptural theology to which ordinary scholars have access, and of which even our common versions give a near and adequate representation—which theology, the hostility of the transcendental criticism cannot reach, and which, by all its art and all its power, is completely unassailable.

34. But while I have said thus much to demonstrate the unproductiveness now of philological criticism in the way of discovery, let me not be understood to depreciate its value or to discourage the study of it; because, however little fitted it

may be for the discharge of one function, it may be of supreme and indispensable value for the discharge of another function. What these functions are, let me state in one sentence. However barren the transcendental criticism may prove for the purposes of *discovery*, it may be all in all for the purposes of *defence*. But before I say any more in regard to this latter function, let me notice, that even irrespective of this, and previous to this consideration, and though I cannot bid you, as matters now stand, look for much from Scripture criticism in the way of discovery, yet I would have you prosecute its lessons to the uttermost that your taste would excite, or your opportunities may allow. You may feel it no great encouragement to be told that the worth of the discoveries themselves becomes of less account just as the work of discovery becomes more arduous. This may perhaps repel you from the enterprise of being a master in the art, but it forms no reason why you should not be an accomplished scholar therein. And you will remember that it is far easier to discern the truths which are known, than to discover the truths which are unknown. To be accomplished in this literature up to its present limits, you will only have to discern —it is to extend these limits that you would have to discover. I cannot consistently with the real state of the case, promise to the few much of important novelty in the one enterprise; but I would have the many to embark upon the other. I would have all, indeed, to be familiar with the Scriptures in their original languages, and to be at least conversant in the critical works of Gerard, and Campbell, and Matthew Poole, and Marsh, and Moses Stuart, besides the Prolegomena of Walton, and Mill, and Wetstein, and Griesbach. Scripture criticism is that in which the learning of our Church is most deficient; and there are few things in which I would more sincerely rejoice than in seeing that deficiency repaired. It is incumbent upon every student of divinity at least to enter on this subject; and I doubt not that in this case a goodly number would overtake the whole of its existing literature. It is no more than respectable that you should be able to see with your own eyes, both the integrity of our received copies, and the truth and justness of our received interpretations. Others may take both the words of the Bible and their meaning upon trust; but it is for you, the future instructors of a lettered and intellectual Church, to lift yourselves up above this dependence—the dependence of the blind upon their leaders. Your office as masters in Israel will be to "read

in the book of the law of God distinctly, and give the sense, and cause the people to understand the reading." From you, as the reservoirs of sacred knowledge, they will draw their immediate supplies; but as reservoirs must be in communication with the fountainhead, so ought you with the original records of inspiration. It is a wretched thing for the teachers of Christianity to depend on the judgment of others, either for a right reading or a right rendering of Scripture. You must be able to exercise an independent judgment of your own, else what will you do when the high authorities are at variance—when Michaelis controverts Wetstein, and Marsh controverts them both. It is not necessary that like them you should be original labourers; but, standing in the same relation to them that a reading and intelligent public do to the authors who address them, it is your part to understand their arguments, and to sit in judgment over them. Though you may never discover, you should be at all times able to discern. They are the producers; but you should be the overseers or inspectors of every article submitted to your notice; and I should like to see, on the appearance of a new critical work, a busy play of thought and intelligent conversation amongst you. The clergy, in fact, form almost the alone public for the reception and encouragement of this sort of authorship; and we again repeat, how desirable it is that, if not yourselves the originators, you should at least be the tasteful and intelligent readers in the very highest of this authorship.

35. But I must confess that both my ambition and my hopes go further than this. I am aware that each study has a fascination of its own; and that even in the thorniest walks of criticism, there are certain flowers and flavours in which the very peculiar senses of some are fitted to luxuriate. We believe, indeed, of the most repulsive kinds of mental employment, that in each there is some special satisfaction, unknown to all but those who have the courage to persevere in it. We believe, for example, that Michaelis, amid the researches of critical and antiquarian lore, spent a life of great enjoyment; and that just in proportion to the agony of his indignation at the librarian and the rocket-maker, who made a sacrifice between them of the Complutensian manuscripts, would have been the ecstasy of his feelings on such a treasure being put into his hands. We think we can imagine, though ashamed to say that yet we do not fully sympathize in, the gusto wherewith a certain few will set themselves down among the torn or faded parchments and the uncial

characters of other days. Though we do not share in this propensity so much as we ought, yet we are fully persuaded of its vigorous existence somewhere; and with no other warrant for our confidence than the mere arithmetic of chances, I fondly calculate that, among the hundreds who pass before me, for the many who should be the accomplished scholars in biblical criticism, a few will be its passionate and devoted amateurs. Could we get numbers to engage in the study, we feel pretty confident that some would be smitten with it. In a science of such manifold pursuits, and where there is room for such varied excellence, we could not well afford a universal mania in any one direction. But for the full equipment of our Church there should be labourers, and, if possible, of the first eminence, in every direction. The walk of Scripture criticism is that which at present is most unoccupied. Should I know but one instance of a powerful affinity for this study, and an intense prosecution thereof, I would do my uttermost to foster and patronize it—feeling as I do of this class-room that one of its proudest literary honours would be that there had issued from its walls some future Griesbach of Scotland.

36. But let me not forget the far higher importance of the acquirement than that of a mere literary gratification. You will not have proceeded far in the study without being able to distinguish between those parts of it which minister to speculative curiosity, and those which are of momentous application in questions that relate to the subject-matter of Christianity. You will be delighted to find, that, agreeably to all our principles, the evidence in matters of essential doctrine is far more obvious and accessible than in many controverted passages, whose determination involves nothing that is of the slightest consequence to faith or practice. But how inexcusable not to be in possession of this evidence at first hand—not to be qualified for arguing the Arian, and the Socinian, and the Pelagian controversies, in Greek; and, on the other hand, when comparing Scripture with Scripture in the original, how satisfactory to observe the abundance of that light which falls without intervention from the *ipsissima verba* of the apostles on the weightiest truths of revelation. You are then in the very heart and substance of all that is most useful in Scripture criticism, when you make a distinct study or exercise of any of the great controversies according to the learned treatment of them. Take the divinity of Christ for an example. You should be masters of all the emendatory

criticism which relates to the integrity of the various passages where this doctrine is attested; and you should be masters of all the interpretative criticism that applies to the sense of these passages. We shall be able, I trust, to present you with various specimens of this in our course when discussing some of the chief articles of our faith; and I would only add, that, besides the regular controversies, there are many useful and agreeable walks of criticism that might be struck out by yourselves, in the course of your growing familiarity with the original languages of Scripture. There are certain words and phrases, both of capital importance and of frequent reiteration, in the Bible, which might well be fastened on as topics of separate investigation. There is still the light of many a pleasing confirmation which remains to be elicited from the comparison of passages which you can easily bring together by means of a Greek and Hebrew concordance. Had I time for it, I should feel much disposed to prosecute in this way an inquiry into the varied meanings of such words as πίστις, and ἅγιος, and χάρις, and δικαιοσύνη, with all its correlatives, or of such phrases as δικαιοσύνη τοῦ Θεοῦ, βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ, δικαιώθεις ἐκ πίστεως. And although it be an undoubted truth that Scripture is its own best interpreter, yet much, if not of essential, at least of confirmatory evidence, may be drawn from classical authors; and particularly, in giving additional proofs for the sense of particular terms, as of δικαιοσύνη, whether in the personal or forensic meaning of it, and of πίστις, in its various imports from a simple credence to the moral quality of faithfulness. When once you have learned the use of Scripture criticism as a general instrument, you will be able to turn it to many specific investigations, either of what you deem to be most important in itself, or of what you immediately require for the solution of your own particular difficulties. I feel as if I cannot adequately explain all the satisfaction which I am sure you will experience in such exercises of professional literature—in the prosecution of which, along with those daily readings of the original Scriptures which I would most strenuously recommend, you will at length attain to all the intimacy of a pocket-companion with the Greek New Testament. Out of the immense accumulations of Scripture criticism, you will be able to distinguish between that which is of doctrinal importance, and that which is not so; and at the same time will not fail to remark how much the plain sense of the Bible, in whole hosts of unquestioned and unquestionable passages, is on the side of ortho-

doxy. This brings us back to our oft-repeated principle, that, after all, the most precious articles of our creed do not require the efforts of any high or arduous criticism for their direct establishment; yet how infinitely better that you should see this for yourselves than that you should be told of it by others—that you should meet the champions of heresy on any ground which they might fix upon for their arena; and that, firm in the conscious possession of the requisite learning, you should be able, with confident minds and unabashed visages, to contend intelligently, as well as earnestly, for the faith once delivered to the saints.

37. And this brings us back to the main reason why a Scripture criticism, and that too of the most refined and scholar-like description, is indispensable to the maintenance of orthodoxy. What a school-boy in the languages can *translate*, might require a savant in the languages, and that of the very highest order, to *defend;* and the Church militant on earth is wanting in her full equipment if she have no such savant within her borders—one who could travel over the whole compass, both of Biblical and Grecian literature, and could reinforce his argument by the practice and authority of cognate languages. We believe that even in his hand the services of philology, viewed as an instrument of discovery, will be of little avail; but as an instrument of defence, they are indispensable. Here we see at once wherein it is that the great use of philology in Scripture criticism, and wherein it is that her comparative uselessness, lies. As an instrument of discovery, it has been overrated, because only so in things that are minute. As an instrument of defence, it cannot be overrated, because so in things that are momentous. This is the great instrument in fact, not by which orthodoxy hath gained the positions that she now occupies, but by which she is enabled to defend them; and when assailed either by infidelity from without, or by heresy from within, they are our philologists and our men of antique lore together, who lift the mightiest polemic arm in the battles of the faith. Philological criticism has her amateurs and her impassioned followers; and we know how mortifying it is to those embarked with all their taste and energy on some favourite pursuit, when told of its practical insignificance. But if philological criticism do lie open to this charge on the one ground, there is full compensation made by the high importance conceded to her on the other ground. This should at once satisfy the claims of the philologists; and what is of far more conse-

quence, should settle the minds of unlearned Christians, when visited by any anxious fears about the competency of our present version for making them wise unto salvation. When the pretensions of philology as an instrument of discovery are pushed too far, it does have the effect of disquieting and giving painful insecurity to an unlettered mind. But when, instead of this, its power as an instrument of defence is held to be that wherein its chief glory and importance lie, this is the highest homage that can possibly be rendered to the sufficiency and fulness of that Christian knowledge which lies within reach of the common people. There is a false and unfeeling pedantry which rejoices in the wanton disturbance that it gives to minds of deepest seriousness; but I bid you remark how far more beautiful and good the exhibition is, when the illiterate and the humble are assured, as they may well be, that all which is important in the subject-matter of Christianity is fully in their possession; and when men of science, instead of wrapping themselves like Egyptian priests of old in hieroglyphic mystery, count it, in this instance at least, their higher glory, to own the fellowship of a common doctrine with the multitude, and to spread the canopy of their protection over the faith of our cottage patriarchs.

38. In the peaceful and ordinary seasons of the Church, their services may not be needed; but when danger threatens, or an attack is offered, then the Church does with her philologists what the State does with her fleets that are lying in ordinary—she puts them into commission, and to them, far more than to any blind hereditary veneration on the part of our people, does she owe it, that both the Arian and the Socinian heresies have been kept from her borders. And here I am reminded of one of the noblest passages in the whole recorded eloquence of Canning, who, in his speech to the corporation of Plymouth, adverted to the inaction of the navy during peace, but to the mighty power that lay up in reserve in those enormous floating masses whose assemblage at that port forms one of the most glorious of our national spectacles. "Our present repose," he said, "is no more a proof of our inability to act, than the state of inertness and inactivity in which I have seen those mighty masses that float in the waters above your town, is a proof they are devoid of strength and incapable of being fitted for action. You well know, gentlemen, how soon one of those stupendous masses, now reposing on their shadows in perfect stillness, how soon, upon any call of patriotism or necessity, it would assume the likeness

of an animated thing, instinct with life and motion; how soon it would ruffle, as it were, its swelling plumage, how quickly it would put forth all its beauty and its bravery, collect its scattered elements of strength, and awaken its dormant thunders. Such as is one of these magnificent machines when springing from inaction into a display of its might, such is England itself, while apparently passive and motionless, she silently concentrates the power to be put forth on an adequate occasion." And such, I would add, are those endowed colleges, whether by the State or by the people, which though often the dormitories of literature, are yet, if but rightly patronized and administered, best fitted for fostering into maturity and strength the massive learning of a nation. In such institutes as these, there lies up, if not a force in action, at least a force in readiness. This is the age of hostility to endowments; but just because the alleged wealth and the alleged indolence of our established dignitaries have been looked to with an evil eye. Yet why not the wealth without the indolence; and then it will be found that to the science and scholarship of universities, the theological literature of our land will stand indebted for her best acquisitions. And we hold it a refreshing spectacle, at any time that meagre Socinianism pours forth a new supply of flippancies and errors, when an armed champion comes forth in full equipment from some high and lettered retreat, ready at all times to face the threatening mischief, and by the might of a ponderous erudition to overbear it.

39. It is not because I hold Biblical criticism to be the first accomplishment of a clergyman, that I am thus strenuous in recommending the prosecution of it. It is because, though not before certain other qualifications in absolute and superlative importance, I hold it to have been inadequately cultivated in Scotland. Speaking relatively to the state of our own Church and our own land, I would say that it has been unduly neglected; and that in regard to it there has been both a defect of authorship, and a defect of general study throughout our ecclesiastical body; I may be doing injustice to some whose names have at present escaped me, but I certainly at the moment do not recollect, save Macknight of Edinburgh, and Campbell of Aberdeen, any who have greatly signalized themselves in this walk of professional literature. We abound in Christian ministers, who by dint of Christian worth and assiduous labour, have operated with surpassing effect on the habits and character of our popula-

tion at large. But I must be forgiven the assertion, that in the kind of lore which I have now specified, we have been outrivalled by the divines of our sister Establishment—that in the works of Mill, and Hammond, and Clarke, and Matthew Poole, there is a massive and elaborate erudition which Scotland has not reached, which Scotland has scarcely aspired after.

40. But there is now the dawn of a brighter day; and it is at the outset of your education, it is the juvenile schools through which you pass, previous to the entrance on your academic career—it is there where the signs of light and of promise are most discernible. The high degree of classical proficiency that is now attainable in schools, must have a controlling effect on the degree of your advancement in all the subsequent stages of education. You will, in virtue of your higher preliminary scholarship, come forth of our Greek and Latin classes at college far more expert and proficient linguists than the students of a former generation. And when you do transfer your attention from profane to sacred literature—when you pass from the study of the classics to the study of the original Scriptures, and to the perusal of those critics, and fathers, and theologians, who have delivered themselves in one or other of the dead languages, you will leave far behind you those of us whose boyhood has been cast on that period when classical learning in Scotland was at its lowest ebb. There is now a manifest revival. In the state more especially of our city schools, we have palpable proof of it at our own doors. And through the medium of like seminaries, now maturing and multiplying all over the land, we look not merely for the restoration of a more chaste and Attic literature, but for having the firm staple, the weight and the texture, of the good olden erudition restored to us.

41. Ere I for the present leave this subject, there is one earnest recommendation that I should like to leave along with it. It is that you should give one, I should prefer two, hours a day to the reading of one or other of the dead languages. The original Scriptures will supply you with the matter of a never-failing exercise, which might be still more added to by the perusals of the Fathers and the older theologians. This is the time for enlarging your stock of vocables, and for becoming familiar both with the general structure and the peculiar idioms of other tongues. I am aware of the vast superiority which a knowledge of things has over the knowledge of words; and that theirs is indeed a glaring inversion who estimate the vehicle more highly

than the contents of the vehicle. But by the course which I now recommend, you just put yourself into closer contact with the things—and these things without contamination or without change, from the verbal transformations which they have been made to undergo. You are enabled to lay an immediate hand on the matter of theology—and that both unimpaired in point of strength, and unvitiated in point of quality, by its passing through the medium of a translation. I promise you some of your happiest, your most enraptured hours, while you are thus familiarizing yourselves with the lore of antiquity in the languages of antiquity. And I know that if all, or the greater part of you, would follow the recommendation, there must be a kindred few to whom nature has given a special appetency, and so impressed a special designation for the service, who will go greatly beyond it. The felt attractions of the study itself will come in place of my entreaties, and, in fact, will supersede them. All the genius that is appropriate to this variety of our professional literature will develop itself by the perseverance of a few months; and we shall behold a certain number of you devoted to the intense and enamoured prosecution of it. I should like that in this way all were leavened with a general taste for the subject, and that others of peculiar mood, either for appreciating its niceties, or for grappling with the work of its more arduous researches, its more difficult and profound speculations, should redeem the honours of our Church by their high reach of proficiency, and at length by their consequent authorship.

42. Our chief anxiety in propounding these views on Scripture criticism is, lest it should be thought that we mean to depreciate the importance of the theme, or to discourage the study of it; whereas it is our earnest and intent object to explain what that precisely is in which its chief importance lies; and not only to recommend as desirable a general scholarship in this department throughout the ministers of our Church, but to urge as indispensable a most thoroughly accomplished and transcendental scholarship to as many as might suffice for the vindication or defence of a scriptural faith against the inroads of heresy and error. Such a scholarship is in fact one of the necessaries of the Church militant, as well as fitted to minister a supreme luxury and enjoyment to those, its successful adepts and cultivators, who have scaled its most difficult and laborious ascents, and now expatiate in its highest walks. We can well imagine and acknowledge the satisfaction felt by them in every

footstep of their progress—their delight in the perception of those hidden harmonies which are out of sight to all who are not versant in the original languages of Scripture—and more especially when they succeed in rescuing from the hands of the enemy some passage or testimony which had been appropriated on the side of false doctrine, but is now demonstrated, and that with equal or superior erudition, to be a tributary and a support in favour of what had been before the general understanding among the orthodox and the pious, of the truth as it is in Jesus. All this can most cheerfully be admitted; and yet so far from operating to the prejudice or exclusion, it is all corroborative of the glorious affirmation—that without the Scripture criticism of the learned, and through the medium of our existing translations alone, the general multitude of the faithful have ready and abundant access to the whole of that truth which is unto salvation; and that whatever of instruction there is in the Bible which bears fruit unto the holiness that in the end has everlasting life, is within the reach of all.

43. Now what is true of the people holds alike true of students in divinity. If the former, because all the weighty truths of religion are within their reach, can even without learning appropriate and apply them to the effect of their becoming good Christians—the latter for the same reason, or just because the weightiest truths of religion are also within their reach, can, without being accomplished Scripture critics, arrange and systematize them to the effect of their becoming able and scientific theologians. It is true that each of these might be helpless, as any of the common people, when the argument is carried beyond the confines of the existing translation, and there arises a call for the Church to vindicate the cause of orthodoxy on the ground of the original languages. But then it is that our textuaries and philologists come to his aid; and though belonging to neither the one nor the other class of labourers, or at least with no claim to a place of eminence among them, he might nevertheless, in the proper work and vocation of theology, make a better use than either of the results which they have put into his hands. It is necessary for the Church that she should have men within her borders who, severally and distinctly, are competent to the fulfilment of both services, and on the principle of the division of employment, it will, generally speaking, be all the better executed, if done by men labouring in their respective departments apart from each other. Not but that Scripture

criticism should form a branch of their general education to all our ecclesiastics—when nature, who makes the wisest distribution of her gifts, or rather when the Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as He will, will in the course of their preparation for the ministry, call forth the special aptitudes of some, so as that they shall first evince an intense and devoted partiality, and afterwards attain to a transcendental eminence in this walk of professional literature. It is thus that throughout the clerical order, the many should form a reading and intelligent public, whilst the few will suffice either for discoverers or champions of the truth on the high field of authorship. In other words, there are different functions in the Church, and these are usually best performed by different functionaries. It is the province of one class to settle aright the readings and the renderings of Scripture; it is the province of another class, in the exercise of their distinctive faculty, to act as wise master-builders on the foundation which has thus been laid—whether as doctrinal theologians or as practical theologians, looking at one time to the objective truths of Scripture, and at another to the adaptation of these truths to man's subjective nature. In the days of the Church's spiritual prosperity, both her critics and her theologians will work rightly and harmoniously into each other's hands. But she has her days, too, of darkness and derangement, when it will be found, not only that a good theologian may be an indifferent critic, but that a most erudite though a sadly perverse and sophistical critic might, like the Neologists of Germany, be a wretchedly bad theologian.

44. But while a perverse, though highly elaborate and erudite Scripture criticism has given birth or rather countenance to Neology, and by the weight of authority has made it formidable —yet it is Scripture criticism, after all, and on the strength of a principle which, when once announced, is exceedingly obvious, that is the proper, the rightful, and withal the most effectual instrument for the overthrow of its pretensions and its power. The principle is analogous to, or perhaps it may be said, identical with, that which is commonly given in the form that an author is his own best interpreter, or tantamount to this, that the meaning of a term is determined by the usages of speech; and the use which is actually made of it is gathered from its obvious connexion with the words or subject-matter of the passage and place where it actually stands. To express it otherwise, the primary evidence for a meaning lies not in the lexicon

where it is merely registered, but in the context where the word in question is imbedded, and whence its meaning in general shines palpably forth, from the relation in which it obviously stands to the words and the clauses that lie around it. We read in the lexicon that one of the senses of the Greek ἐπὶ is the English *upon*, when the preposition is placed before the accusative case. Thus tells the lexicon; but who told the lexicographer? He generally gives his authorities; and when it is a Scripture lexicon, these are neither more nor less than Bible sentences or Bible texts. He does not say in behalf of the information he is giving, that he had it from another lexicographer. These sentences or texts are in truth his informers, and they are ours also. He counts it enough that he makes simple exhibition of these. It is to them that he appeals, and the appeal is quite a sufficient one. Accordingly, one of his references for the signification of ἐπὶ being *upon*, where it governs the dative, is to Mark vi. 39, and it speaks for itself. There we read that "He commanded all to sit down by companies *upon* the green grass" (ἐπὶ τῷ χλωρῷ χόρτῳ). No doubt this said preposition is found to signify *upon*, when it governs the accusative case. But where is it that we so find? Just as in the instance before us, in the places where they occur, and in which places, too, the instances speak as decisively for themselves. In regard to the example on hand, though it had stood alone, and not another such had occurred within the whole compass of Grecian literature—although it had been the solitary case among ten thousand others, in all of which ἐπὶ, signifying *upon*, invariably governed the accusative—yet here, in the light of its own peculiar or contextual, or it may be termed local evidence, we should, in the face of this unanimous array, have stood up for the signification *upon* in the case before us. The verse has been rightly translated: "He commanded them to make all sit down by companies *upon* the green grass." It surely could not mean that they were to sit *beside* the grass: as little could it mean *beyond* the grass; for where, in the name of wonder, should they be made to sit down but just upon the grass?—a plain enough demonstration, then; so plain as to make the quotation of it ludicrous, that the evidence of the context for the text, or of the sentence for the single word, is really evidence at first hand; in other words, that the lexicon is not the fountainhead of our light for the meaning of words or phrases, but that it is only the reflector of a light which radiates from the author; and that it is to his pages, and more especially to the

place which is under discussion, where we should look for the real fountainhead.

45. Now on the strength of this consideration, simple and even puerile though it may appear, we hold that Neology might be cut up by the roots. The great artifice of this system, and an artifice often resorted to by the dealers in heresy in a smaller way, is to find out an unwonted signification for the words, and so to reverse the meaning of it in those passages which had heretofore been regarded as decisive of the question, and on the side of orthodoxy. And there might be no ground for disputing the Neological signification in the place where it has been discovered, and to which the Neologists make their appeal, and found out by them on some bypath of erudition, which hitherto none had explored but themselves. The sense which they contend for might be the undoubted sense of the word in the passage to which they refer; and evinced to be so by its own contextual light, or what we have termed the local and peculiar evidence which shines on the particular place that has now been opened up for the first time to the observation of philologists and critics. For such is the power of this local and contextual, that it might suffice to establish a meaning for a word which shall be altogether singular—though in the face of ten thousand contrary instances, each determined by a contextual light of its own. Neologists are perfectly right in deferring to the contextual light—we ourselves defer to it along with them—which shines upon their newly discovered passage, and which might fully authorize a quite unexampled meaning for the word in question. But they are not right—they are most inconsistently and glaringly in the wrong, when, with this new meaning of theirs, they would lay an extinguisher on the old and established meaning of the word, and so put out therewith the contextual light of the ten thousand passages which can be quoted in vindication of it. By so doing, they violate all the laws of interpretative probability—not only trampling on the *usus loquendi* of every separate writer, but casting obscuration on the local evidence or contextual light of every separate sentence which has been penned by him. They bear ample respect to the contextual evidence in their own solitary example, when, in opposition to the ten thousand examples of a different or contrary meaning, they insist on the altogether singular meaning of the word at issue in the new place which they have lighted on. And in this we have no quarrel with them. But it is too much that by means of this

single precedent of theirs, they should offer to annihilate that whole army of precedents which can be appealed to on the side of evangelism—with their one man putting a thousand to flight, and refusing to each the benefit of that contextual light whereof in their own solitary instance they have so amply availed themselves.

46. This consideration suggests what we hold to be still a desideratum in sacred literature, and which would prove, we conceive, to be of mighty service in the business of Scripture criticism, and for the defence of orthodoxy. A general concordance of all Greek authors for all the words, even for all the principal words used by them, were a task far too ponderous for execution; but a Greek concordance for all the principal words on the meaning of which there hinges any important doctrine in theology—for all the *voces signatæ*—these words amounting it may be to twelve or twenty or thirty, by the determination of which all the main controversies between the orthodox and the heretics would be determined,—such a concordance, limited to so small a number of terms and phrases, though not limited to a single book, but embracing all the passages where they occur in all the books of the language which have come down to us from ancient times—a compilation of this sort, though grounded on a universal survey of Grecian literature, would not be of unmanageable extent, and would prove an instrument of signal service in the battles of the faith. We should soon observe how little the rare and otherwise unexampled meaning of a word in one or a very few places was entitled to give the law, so as to fix the meaning of that word in all other places; and also how much that meaning in every particular instance was determined, not by the voice of its distant fellows, but by a light which shone immediately around it in its own neighbourhood, and with an intensity proportioned to the nearness, so as to bear with the greatest force of concentration on the sentence where it lay. In far the greatest number of instances it would be found that each text was settled by its own context, and stood there the undoubted bearer of a sense which could not be shaken by all the authorities gleaned by the hand of a far-travelled scholarship, from the remote and seldom or never till now explored regions of our ancient and recondite authorship. It would soon become obvious, and to the utter discomfiture of Neology, that, in point of real effect, its formidable learning was indeed of very feeble achievement, and all the more feeble in proportion to its formid-

ableness; for, after all, the further out of sight, or the further removed from the ken of ordinary readers, the further also from the matter on hand; or in other words, the further out of reach, the further also out of a true reckoning on the question at issue. It were indeed a noble, we believe it to be a fully practicable triumph, thus to unmask the pomp of Neological learning, and make it palpable to all, how hollow its pretensions were to aught like a critical groundwork for its daring liberties with the Word of God; and all the more gratifying, that the monument so raised would prove a munition or bulwark of defence for the faith and piety of unlettered Christians.

47. And the principle of such a work as we have now ventured to recommend, we hold to be beneficial for other purposes than those of controversy; that is, not for the vindication only, but for the direct establishment of the orthodox creed. We conceive it to have been too much the tendency to rest the proof of its articles on the meaning of words looked to singly—thus giving rise to a contest between the opposite meanings of the same word, which might often be easily gathered from the different places in which it stands. We think it has been too much the habit to lay the stress more upon separate words than upon sentences or passages, lighted up by the contextual evidence which gives an obviousness to the sense, whether in the original or in the ordinary translations: and it is this, we conceive, which accounts for the so often better understanding of theology on the part of a homely but earnest reader, than on the part of the learned controversialist. The mists which have been raised in philological warfare, when authorities are parried against authorities on the signification of words taken singly, might often be effectually dissipated, would combatants but agree to look with fairness at the meanings which they bear in the passages where they actually occur. The precious doctrine of the atonement, which has been so mystified in what might be termed the single-handed logomachy of those who argue and counter-argue on the signification of individual words, stands forth clear as sunshine to the apprehensions of those who resign their understandings to the plain statements given forth in the clauses or sentences of a very plain narrative, a very plain description. Let the orthodox and the Socinian controvert the interpretations of each other as they may, in regard to the meaning of such words taken singly as καταλλαγὴ, and λύτρον, and ἱλαστήριον, and θυσία, I have no doubt that each of the parties will readily find their own meanings in the

passages and contexts which are selected respectively by themselves. But the context with me is all in all for fixing down the signification that we are in quest of; and therefore dropping this controversy as irrelevant, though garnished all over on both sides of it with many learned quotations, I take in those contexts whence a broad and resistless light is made to fall on the understanding of all—whether learned or unlearned. And whether I read in the Old Testament of Aaron laying both his hands upon the head of the animal, and confessing over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and putting them upon the animal's head, which was thus made to bear their iniquities; or read in the New Testament that Christ was the substantial reality and antitype to all the rites of the Mosaic Dispensation—then I cannot but understand, in the language of Peter the apostle, that He bare our sins in his body on the tree; and in that of Isaiah the Prophet, that God laid upon Him the iniquities of us all—an evidence this which could be multiplied an hundred-fold throughout whole books and chapters of the Bible.

CHAPTER X.

ON SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

1. THERE is a strong practical analogy between a system in theology and a system in general science, although it be not so perfect and entire throughout but that there are also important differences between them. One individual phenomenon in nature could not assure us of a law or principle in nature, or of any truth of such generality and importance as should entitle it to a place among the articles of a system in any of the natural sciences. We must compare and examine a number of phenomena, and note the resemblances or relations between them, ere we can attain to a law of nature which is grounded on the basis of an extensive induction, and is of itself the summary expression of a general fact. But an individual saying of Scripture may at once, and by itself, assure us of a great and dominant principle in theology, and one of such great and pervading importance, as might well entitle it to the highest place and pre-eminence among the generalities of a theological system. Still, however, and notwithstanding the exception of this dissimi-

larity, there is room and even necessity for the same sort of induction among the individual sayings of Scripture, which is required for the purpose of science among the individual phenomena of nature, and this not so much for adding to the number of proof-passages in behalf of any doctrine, as to make sure of a sustained and unexcepted harmony between them, or of there being no such contradiction as might prove fatal not only to the doctrine in question, but even to the general truth of revelation. There still remains, then, a sufficient and most instructive analogy between the work of the observer in science and that of the Scripture critic in theology, on the one hand; and on the other, between the philosopher in science and the systematizer in theology; such an analogy, in fact, as might guide to the explanation and vindication of the uses of both.

2. It is true that when Scripture criticism is carried to its full extent, the work of systematizing has already begun, for one of its objects, as already explained, is to ascertain the truth of a doctrine. But we might conceive one to go forth on Scripture without one notion of systematic theology in his head, yet with the highest degree of that talent and preparation which might enable him to estimate the import of words and phrases. We might suppose him incapable of deriving any guidance to the meaning of a passage from the analogy of the faith; and that he therefore assigns its meaning to each passage on the pure principles of philology alone. He is like an observer going forth, ignorant of all theory, on the field of nature. The scriptural observer can render accurately each separate word and sentence —just as the natural observer can describe accurately each individual object that lies within the domain over which he expatiates. The one, let us say, with his lexicon, and with all those lights which long practice and recollection in this walk of investigation can supply; the other, perhaps, with his microscope, or his balance, or the busy use of his now well-exercised senses, and the benefit of all those habits which belong to him either as a diligent collector of individual facts, or as a scrupulously accurate describer of the properties of individual objects. The mere linguist is to Scripture what the mere observer is to science. The office of the one is to expound accurately all the separate sayings in the volume of God's word. The office of the other is to expound accurately all the separate things in the volume of God's work, whether you view them as objects, which is the light in which you regard them when you study contemporane-

ous nature, or view them as events, which is the light in which you regard them when you study successive nature. It belongs to neither of them, in their respective characters, to construct a science, whether it be that of theology or any of those numerous sciences which belong to philosophy; but it is the high function of both to furnish each science—Divine or human—with all its materials. Without such labourers, we may have speculations without facts—airy, unsupported theories which have no experimental basis to rest upon—sublime and spacious generalizations which, not sustained in the one case on the foundation of the accurately observed word, and not sustained in the other on the foundation of the accurately observed works, are unlike unworthy of a place in the temple of science or in the temple of sacredness. We are aware of a certain flippant and fashionable contempt for the drudgery more especially of the verbal labourers—of those who either collect the readings and the renderings of others, or who can swell still further the already enormous masses of biblical learning, by criticisms and conjectural emendations of their own. But this is truly not the age for depreciating such labours —the age of facts and findings in every department of investigation. It is most unphilosophical levity thus to cast a slight or a stigma on these pioneers of our profession. They furnish our science with its primary elements, or with what may be termed its raw material. The labours of the men of natural observation are not more essential to a sound philosophy, than the labours, the operose, the pains-taking labours of those men of scriptural observation are to the defence and establishment of a sound faith.

3. Conceive, then, that all the facts which can be gathered from the field of visible nature have been carefully ascertained, so that we are made accurately to know all the individual objects which there exist, and the individual events which may have there occurred—we may not have proceeded beyond the first footstep in the proper philosophy of nature. In the forming of a philosophy, we group together all the facts which have a common resemblance; and it is just by the expression of this resemblance that we announce a general law. The discovery of such a law is but the discovery of such a resemblance, and is the more general according to the number of individual facts by which the resemblance is possessed. One observer might measure the rate of a stone's descent at the surface of the earth, and another observer might measure the rate of the moon's deflection

towards the earth; but it is the part of the philosopher to notice the sameness or similarity of these two facts. He mentally places them together, so as that they shall come at once into view; and when so placed together, he recognises a likeness between them. It is this recognition of likenesses in different events, which essentially constitutes the art of philosophizing. It is the discovery of a universal likeness, as far as observation has yet gone, among all the instances of bodies approaching each other in free space, that led to, or rather that constituted, the discovery of the universal law of gravitation. A law of nature, as I have heard well stated from his university chair, more than forty years ago, by Professor Robison of Edinburgh, is but the expression of a general fact grounded on the observation of particulars, and affirming within the limits of a brief and compendious utterance a something that was common to them all. There may have been thousands of such observations in distant parts of the world, and at different periods of time; but till the pervading similarity was discovered, they formed a loose aggregate of individuals, amounting in multitude to a host that no man could number. To notice this similarity and to announce it, was to effect something more than a useful abbreviation in language. It was the achievement of a substantial discovery on the outer field of contemplation. It was the revelation of nature's most magnificent harmony.

4. In like manner may it be conceived of all the individual sayings which lie scattered up and down over the face of God's word, that the meaning of each has been clearly and accurately rendered: and that by the labours of the Biblical critic, who is just the observer of Scripture, there may have been the same information afforded of every single sentence in the written record, that we have supposed the observer of nature to furnish of all the separate facts and observations in nature. There still remains the same work of generalization to be done with the individuals of the one tablet, as with those of the other. They are grouped together according to their resemblances; and as it was from something common to each in the former case, that a general law in science was educed and established, so from something common to each in the latter case, there is educed a general truth or doctrine in theology. When a hundred facts exhibit one and the same phenomenon, the expression of this phenomenon in its generality is the expression of a principle in philosophy—when a hundred verses speak one and the same

truth, this truth, sustained on the basis of a multiple testimony, may by means of one brief and comprehensive affirmation become the article of a creed. The Scripture critic is in Christianity what the experimentalist or the observer is in science; and the systematic theologian is in Christianity what the philosopher is in science. Unless we have facts, we can have no sound philosophy; and therefore it is that we estimate so highly the worth and importance of Scripture criticism. Unless these facts be classified according to their resemblances or common qualities, we can have no philosophy at all; and therefore it is that we estimate so highly the worth and importance of systematic theology. The latter without the former would be in Christianity what in science would be philosophy without facts. But again, the former without the latter would be to have facts without a philosophy.

5. There are first, then, the individual sayings of Scripture, which, like the individual phenomena of nature, may be regarded as the facts of our science. There is, secondly, the comparison and classification of these sayings, which, just as a natural philosophy is grounded on the resemblances of individuals, gives rise to a systematic Divinity, whose office it is to expound and establish the principles of our science. To ascertain accurately what the sayings are, you must employ as your instruments of observation the grammar, and the lexicon, and the polyglot; and to operate with these on the original languages of the Bible is the part of Scripture criticism—as indispensable to the science as the foundation is to a superstructure. Again, to group and classify the sayings by the similarities which are between them by means of some common and pervading truth, which may appear in hundreds of scattered verses or passages—to frame one article or one summary expression which shall be comprehensive of them all—to look at the sentences of the Bible, not according to their individuality, but to look at them according to their relations or their resemblances;—this is the part of systematic theology; and it, on the other hand, is as indispensable to the science as a superstructure is to a foundation. Theology without Scripture criticism is just as airy and unsupported a nothing, as were a philosophy without facts; and, on the other hand, without a systematic Divinity, it is just as confused and chaotic a jumble as were an undigested medley of facts without a philosophy. Scripture criticism and systematic theology are the integral, the essentially component parts of one and the same science. With-

out the first, it were a baseless unsupported fabric. Without the second, it were an inextricable labyrinth.

6. But let it not be imagined that the work of systematizing is confined to scholars and *savans*, whether in science or in theology. Even a common reader of the Bible, if he but read it with discernment, proceeds a certain way in systematizing it. He cannot do otherwise, without laying a violent arrest on the generalizing tendencies of his nature. In comparing Scripture with Scripture, he recognises a harmony among many different passages; and it is the presence of one and the same truth in each which constitutes the harmony. Let him look however correctly to each passage in its separate individuality alone, and he overlooks that which stands broadly announced to the view, and forces itself on the notice of all other men. We hear much of artificial systems of theology. But in the Bible itself, there are all the legible characters of a system; and we can only escape from the observation of it by the artificial compulsion upon ourselves of shutting our eyes. Even an infant can scarcely look abroad upon nature without the immediate discovery of those similarities among its various and innumerable objects by which it is led to systematize; and its very ability to name and to distinguish a shell, and a bird, and a flower, proves both an early faculty and an early disposition to classify whole hosts of individuals by certain leading characteristics which belong to them. What an infant does, and does so early on the book of nature, a school-boy does, and that too at a very early stage of his converse with the book of revelation. It is not by any process of artificial straining that a system of theology is infused into the mind: it comes spontaneously in reading the Bible. Even the untutored peasant, though all life long he had been kept at a studious distance from creeds, and confessions, and compilations of the faith—even he, if but gifted with ordinary penetration and memory, could not finish his intelligent perusal of Scripture without rising from it a systematic theologian. It is not that he has constructed a system upon the Bible, but it is that the Bible has impressed a system upon him. Even he could group many verses together, and recognise the same pervading truth in each individual of the assemblage. He is conscious of meeting it in various and distant places of the written record. He is sensible of so many distinct practical uses, by which the lessons and announcements of Scripture may be distinguished from each other. He discerns the relative magnitude

and importance of these lessons; and those which are supreme in estimation, will of course impress themselves more deeply upon his memory and his regards than those which are subordinate. It is thus that he cannot traverse, even in the order in which they lie, the many chapters of the Bible, without carrying off the impression of a few great principles; or, in other words, without the impress of a system upon his understanding. It is true that with him it may be but the faint and shadowy sketch of a system, and the work of a professional theologian may be requisite to give it distinctness of parts, and definiteness of outline. But this is not a work done by him at random. He does not forge a system: he only finds it in the Bible. It is lighted up to his view in the act of looking to the very quarter where the peasant looked before him, and he only differs in looking more closely and more intelligently. It is not in virtue of his laxer attention to Scripture, but of his more earnest heed thereunto, that the system which floats so vaguely and uncertainly in the mind of the peasant, assumes a more fixed character and shape, I was going to say in the mind of the philosopher. And it were rightly said; for, in truth, the systematic theologian is the philosopher of Christianity. It is his office to mark the generic resemblances which obtain among the specific objects of his contemplation, and thus to marshall the individual sayings of the Bible under the more brief and comprehensive sayings of a creed. We are aware that there are theorists in Christianity; but ever remember, that to systematize is not to theorize. The one is just as unlike the other, as the philosophy of nature in modern times is unlike to the philosophy of nature in the middle ages. To frame a speculation from the gratuitous fancies of one's own spirit, is a wholly different exercise from that of classifying, according to their observed resemblances, the observed individuals which have a place and a substantive being in some outer field of contemplation. In the case before us, these individuals are Bible texts; and the theologian who systematizes these fancies nothing, conjectures nothing. He deals not with what he fancies, but with what he finds—not with the specious plausibilities which himself hath pictured, but with the solid materials which Scripture or the Scripture critic hath put into his hands.

7. But lest system should be deemed one of the corruptions of philosophy, let us further consider if in the Bible itself there be any sanction given to those mental processes of which a system

in theology is the inevitable result. Does not an apostle then enter into such a process when, in his following summary of the uses of Scripture, he casts it into certain leading divisions, and affixes a general characteristic to each of them?—"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness." And does he not suppose a systematic view of the doctrines of revelation indispensable to every expounder of it, when he speaks of it as a qualification of "a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, that he rightly divideth the truth?" And does he not himself systematize, when, within the limits of a sentence, he gives a brief and comprehensive statement of the substance of his preaching—telling us that it was "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ?" And does he not describe the work of Christian instruction as if it proceeded in the very way in which a system is expounded, when he speaks of "laying the foundation," and communicates by a very few generalities "the first principles of the oracles of God;" and urges his disciples to go on from the simple and elementary lessons of Christian doctrine to the perfection of its higher, its more arduous lessons—as from the "milk that was for babes," to the "strong meat" that was for those of "full age" and "exercised discernment?" And above all, if it be in the spirit of a system to reduce a whole host of particulars within the scope of one sweeping and comprehensive generality; to designate a numerous family of individual truths by a single and summary expression; to lay hold of one great object or great principle, and to concentrate upon it a supreme and almost an exclusive regard, thereby giving us to understand that it enveloped all, and subordinated all, how can this be more strongly exemplified than by him who was "determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified?" The apostle Paul did not overlook the individualities of Scripture, but he also looked at the reigning character which he saw to be in each of them; and, seizing upon it, rendered it the collective homage which is due unto them all.

8. This antipathy to system in theology proceeds on the mistake of confounding the generalities of our systematic divines with the generalities of our old schoolmen—instead of which, they ought to be considered as altogether of the same character with the generalities of modern science. Philosophy presents us, not with hypothetic imaginations, but with the generalities

of actual nature. Systematic theology presents us not with gratuitous or hypothetic imaginations, but with the generalities of actual Scripture. The former we do not discard as we would the nonentities of aerial speculation, because they have all been constructed on the findings of experience. The latter we should not discard as we would the nonentities of aerial speculation, if they have all been gathered from the readings and the renderings of Scripture criticism. The systematic theologian, merely as such, superadds nothing to the informations of the Bible. He comes not under the denunciation that shall fall upon him who addeth to the words of this book. He does not add, he only classifies. He does not add what is new, he but classifies what is old. When a certain doctrine is clearly announced in one Scripture saying, and the same doctrine is as clearly announced in another Scripture saying, he but remarks on this identity; and this indeed is a very different thing from hazarding any new doctrine of his own. He utters nothing which he has not found and fetched from the document itself. The Scripture critic gives most important information, when he tells the separate meaning of all the separate sentences in the Bible. And the systematic theologian gives information additional to this, and most important too, but still it is Bible information; not perhaps what Scripture in any single place says, but what, on comparing Scripture with Scripture, is found to be clearly enveloped in a whole cluster of its sayings, collected from and confirmed by as many different places as there are individuals in the cluster. The Bible, in presenting as it does a vast number of individual objects, may be truly said to represent along with them the relations and resemblances of these objects. It is the part of the systematic theologian to tell us not of the individuals: this is done by the Scripture critic. But it is his part to tell us of the relations and resemblances between the individuals; and in the act of doing so, he just as much as the other tells us of nothing but that which is contained within the four corners of the Bible.

9. Yet let us not forget the distinction which has been already adverted to, between the work of systematizing in the study of nature and the work of systematizing in the study of the Bible. The individuals which you do compare in nature are the direct objects, the *ipsa corpora* of the science. The individuals which you compare in Scripture are not the direct objects, but the sayings which relate to the direct objects, or *ipsa corpora* in

theology. In the study of nature, you require a very extensive induction, and to be conversant with a great number of individuals, ere you can found on the resemblance between them a law or a general expression, which shall reach to all and include all. But in the Bible, one saying might announce some great generality that is comprehensive of many individual objects —so that though it be by a thousand observations in nature that we arrive at a principle, we may arrive at a principle in theology by a single observation—that is, by a single reading in the Bible. If it were only to be learned through the medium of observation, we should require a very extensive induction ere we had established the doctrine that all men are sinners. But when learned through the medium of revelation, the same doctrine of a common resemblance between all the individuals of our species, may be established by means of one verse, or the clause of a verse. And the same is true of other relations besides resemblances. It is by a few unambiguous passages that we ascertain the Divinity of the Son and the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, so that without the same sort of extended survey which is needed in the science of nature, we can fix a most important relation in the science or the system of theology, even our relation both to the agent who sanctifies and to the agent who redeemed us. By thus attending to the distinction between verbal assertions and the things which are asserted, it will be perceived, on the one hand, that a single verse might assert a most pervading and pre-eminent generality in the system of revealed truth; and, on the other hand, a number of verses might agree in deponing to some individuality of which systematic theology takes no notice. This, however, does not supersede the importance of comparing Scripture with Scripture, and of grouping texts according to their relations and resemblances. If you do not add to the comprehensiveness of the doctrine by this, as you do to a doctrine in science when you widen the field of induction, you at least add to the number of its proof-passages; and then what makes the comparison of Scripture with itself indispensable, you evince on the side of the doctrine in question a harmonious as well as an abundant testimony, and repel that charge of contradiction which would be alike fatal to the doctrine and to the authority of the book which held it;—so that in explaining the word of God, the classification of its kindred passages is called for, whether the common meaning that belongs to them all stand broadly forth in plain

and lucid assertion, or lurk more obscurely and must be elicited by inference and implication. At all events, the respective provinces of the Scripture critic and the systematic theologian are sufficiently marked—it being the office of the one to assign its precise sense to each individual saying in the Bible, and of the other to ground upon the sayings the general scheme of doctrine contained in it.

10. It belongs to a lower faculty of our nature to apprehend individual objects. To apprehend the relations between them, to compare, and abstract, and thence to generalize, this belongs to a higher faculty. The former can be done to a great extent by children, or even by idiots; the latter marks a creature of fuller growth and nobler endowments. Surely when God cometh forth from His sanctuary with a communication to our world, we should go forth to meet it with all the powers and perceptions of our rational nature. We do it not enough of reverence, if we yield but the response to it of one faculty alone—keeping all the rest in a state of abeyance, or bidding them away from the interview. This might be a suitable welcome from those who can hold intercourse with the word only by one faculty, but not a suitable welcome from those whom God himself has gifted with capacities great and various. It is not enough, then, that we have a Scripture criticism on each of the Bible's specific sayings, we must have a systematic theology that compares and classifies, and thence educes the general truths and harmonies of the Bible. And as the Psalmist would stir up all that is in him to bless the holy name of God, so ought we to stir up all that is within us to entertain and do homage to that word which God hath exalted above all His name.

11. To be a systematic theologian, it is not necessary to travel forth of the record. He has only to assemble together, whether by their relations or by their similarities, the things that are within it. This he does by the apostolic direction of "meditate on these things," not on things extrinsic to revelation, but on the very things, new or old, which every scribe rightly instructed can bring forth of the treasury. We ask him not to go forth without the limits of the book of revelation, or to conjure up from the dark unknown beyond it any presumptions and plausibilities of his own. We ask him only to give earnest heed unto the word of God's testimony. He adds nothing of his own by this exercise: he only discovers what is set before him in the book of the counsel of God. He becomes wise thereby, not

above what is written, but only up to what is written. Or, in other words, it is not by means of any new individual sayings uttered from himself, but by giving himself wholly to investigate the resemblances, and the affinities, and the applications, which obtain among the individual sayings already spread out before him on the record of God, and to which he does not and dares not make any additions of his own ; it is thus that he becomes a scientific and systematic theologian. He invents nothing, He creates nothing. He is as little a creator in the word of God, as he is a creator in the works of God. He acts the creator in neither, but he acts the observer in both ; and all that is needful for the construction of a systematic theology, is, that the observations shall not be confined to the things of Scripture, each viewed in their separate individuality alone, but shall be extended to the relations which obtain between the individuals. It is when thus employed that—not by the faculty of invention, but by the legitimate exercise of other faculties—there emerge those generalities which constitute a system, and without which we affirm that all our acquaintance with the Bible would be but the idiot acquisition of him who had every text and sentence of it upon his memory. It is by system, in fact, that the student not only becomes a profoundly intelligent theologian, but it is moreover by system that he grows in the practical wisdom of Christianity—more especially in that work and wisdom of a Christian minister, by his proficiency in which it is that his profiting appears unto all.

12. And like as the philosopher looks with charmed eye on those hidden symphonies of the divine workmanship which, by means of science and of system, himself hath evolved, so it is by systematizing, too, that the theologian arrives at a contemplation no less glorious in the symphonies of the divine word. It is indeed one of the highest luxuries of intellect, to behold in nature a simple and sublime mechanism, whose countless myriads of phenomena can be traced to a few great and presiding influences —as when the one law of gravitation, simple and universal among the rolling wonders of the firmament, subordinates to itself all the paths and all the periods of astronomy. There might have been expected such analogies between the material and the spiritual economy, as that they should have borne the impress of the same divinity who emanated them both ; and that as in the one so in the other, there would be certain summits of lofty speculation, whence, by the help of some great principle, a

commanding survey might be taken over the wide domains of a high and heavenly administration. And thus it will be found, too, that the system of Christianity has its magnificence and its mechanism, and its exquisite harmonies; that as there is a manifold wisdom in creation, so there is a manifold wisdom in the Church, a body politic "fitly framed together," with its central and presiding influence, and its great channel of conveyance, by which the spiritual virtue passes from the fountainhead to all the members. When we give earnest heed unto that dispensation, whose object is to readjust the broken union between heaven and earth, we shall be regaled by the same or similar spectacles, and feel all the pleasure and triumph of the same mental exercises which we so often experience when contemplating the processes of science. This will more especially be felt when we look to the actions and the reactions between Christianity and Nature; or to the respondency which there is between the moral forces of the Bible and the moral nature of him to whom that Bible is addressed. Whether we direct our regards to that supernal application of truth and doctrine which hath come to us from above, or to the recipient feelings and faculties of the men who are below, and who are to be regenerated thereby—we shall meet with such a harmony of parts, such a dependence of effects upon causes, such an adaptation of means to an end, as form the very lineament of a system at once beneficent and beautiful. But what serves most of all to characterize it as a system, is that aspect which it has of simplicity and greatness, when it offers to our notice one great object, or one great and comprehensive principle—as in the upper kingdom of heaven, when we look unto Him who is the head of that great mediatorial economy which has been instituted for the restoration of our world; or as in what may be called the nether kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of heaven in our hearts, when we look to the supremacy of faith, and observe its paramount ascendency over the aims and affections of the inner man—so as to transform him whom it actuates into a good and a godlike creature. After that Scripture criticism hath done its uttermost, these are the sublimer studies which remain to us. After that the specific import of each of the sayings hath been thoroughly explored, there are spectacles of grace and of grandeur still to be evolved, and which will abide in as profound obscurity to us as to the infant or the idiot, unless we found a system upon the sayings. Without system, in fact, we could neither assign

the bearings nor trace the developments of an economy, in comparison with the greatness of whose objects all other things are ephemeral and vain—an economy which had its first buddings at the commencement of our world, and which hath marched and brightened onward in stately progression through all the generations of our world's history—which had prophets for its precursors, and miracles for its attendants and its heralds—the noblest surely of all contemplations, having its origin in the unsearchable wisdom of God, and its issues in a deathless eternity.

13. A sound systematic theology rests as much on Scripture criticism as its basis, as a sound philosophy rests on the basis of experiments and facts. If it be the part of the one to construct a framework, it is the part of the other to furnish the materials; and indeed systematic theology goes beyond her legitimate sphere, if she make not use of the very materials, and of no other, which Scripture criticism puts into her hand. The latter, therefore, stands in a much higher relation to the former than that of a mere auxiliary for helping on the edifice. It supplies the whole matter or substratum of the edifice. That, surely, is no subordinate function to deal out the substantive things which it is but the office of the other to arrange or put together. The subservience then of Scripture criticism to systematic theology must be quite obvious; though perhaps it may not be so obvious, that systematic theology does in return contribute a certain aid, does cast a certain reflex light on the labours of Scripture criticism. The truth is, that the tendency to system in science speeds the work of natural observation, and the tendency to system in theology speeds the work of scriptural observation. In both it is a system in embryo, or a system in progress, that stimulates to a more near and diligent inspection of the objects whose relations or whose resemblances we are attending to. And when these objects are kindred passages of Scripture, we find that to be in the midst of them is to be in a region of light, where all the objects become greatly more visible than before, by the very reflection which they cast on each other. You are not to conceive, then, though Scripture criticism furnishes the materials, and systematic theology arranges them, that, in the order of time, the task of the former is completed ere that the latter takes its commencement. Our observation of resemblances begins almost as early as our observation of individuals does; and accordingly system, whether in science or theology, begins with our earliest notice of the resemblances between individuals,

though it is only completed by our thorough observation of these resemblances. So that if, on the one hand, Scripture criticism present the objects which systematic theology compares together —on the other hand, systematic theology, even when obscurely guessing at the imagined resemblances of objects, gives both energy and guidance to the investigations of Scripture criticism. This is quite in harmony with what has been well remarked by philosophers on the use of hypothesis in stimulating and directing the work of observation. We arrive sooner at the truth in this way, than by throwing ourselves abroad, as it were, on a multitude of particulars, without even the imagination of a theory. Better than to set forth in this blank and unoccupied state on the work of inquiry, is it to set forth with some previous guess or hypothesis in our head. It is better, even though the hypothesis should turn out to be a false one; our great aim, of course, will be to verify our guess. Suppose it then disproved, we substitute another in its place—from which, though again driven to another and another, we shall come by a tentative process to the truth at last. Now, the affirmation in regard to the discoveries of science is, that we come sooner to the truth in this way than if we enter on the work of investigation free of all incipient tendency to systematize.

14. Systematic theology is of the same use to Scripture criticism that a hypothesis is to science—not to supersede investigation, but to direct investigation. Just as in the one, hypothesis has often been the instrument of discovery by the experiments which it suggests, or by the tracts of observation to which it has pointed the way; so in the other, actual discoveries of the Bible's primitive meaning have been made just by the discoveries of a systematic but as yet hypothetical theology having been put upon their trial. While systematic theology is not yet perfected, but in progress, it might have ventured on affirmations which ought not to be admitted as certainties, but only to be entertained as guesses, and to remain in this state of abeyance till the guesses have either been disproved or verified. It is evident that the likelier these guesses are, the nearer must be the harmony of those Scriptures which are brought together in the work of scrutinizing them. The attention of the inquirer is thus more guided to and concentrated on those parallel passages, by the comparison of which it is that some new light will most readily be made to arise. A hypothesis is not a discovery, but it may serve as a finger-post to those places where the dis-

covery is at length to be found. Verisimilitudes are not verities, but they may serve as the indices of that path in the prosecution of which they shall at last brighten into verities. Such is the love of system, that systematic theology has in all ages kept ahead of Scripture criticism; but in so doing the one has dragged the other forward at a greatly faster rate than it would have advanced of its own native tendencies. We hazard the assertion, that Scripture criticism has come forth in tenfold greater abundance, and received a tenfold better direction, in virtue of that systematic theology by which it is outrun.

15. I may here offer one remark on the guidance which is afforded to Scripture criticism by the analogy of the faith. I think that Dr. Campbell sets too little value on it as a principle of interpretation; and I feel fully persuaded that, had but the analogy occurred to him between the use of this principle to a Scripture critic and the use of hypothesis in observation, a mind so acute and philosophical as his would not have so slighted its authority in the business of assigning their specific import to certain words and phrases in Holy Writ. From the extreme length to which these general observations have been already carried, I dare not venture at present upon the details of this question; but let me, for the purpose of making myself intelligible, just advert to one of the simplest cases, taken from that verse in the Apocalypse where our Saviour is styled—"The beginning of the creation of God"—ἀρχὴ τοῦ κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ. A question that might be raised on this passage is, whether did the creation begin with Christ, or did Christ begin the creation? whether was He before all other created things as being Himself created the first, or was He the Creator of all things? If the last be held as the signification, then ἀρχὴ must be understood not as meaning a commencement, but a commencer, an efficient principle. Now, though I am not aware of any countenance given to this interpretation of ἀρχὴ by profane writers, excepting perhaps that given by Ovid in the line—"Ille opifex rerum mundi melioris origo,"—where *origo* must be understood in the active sense of an originator: yet we are compelled to adopt it, not however by our deference to a system, but by our deference to the plain and undeniable sense of other passages in the Bible—more especially where it is said of Christ, that "by Him all things were created," and "that without Him was not anything made that was made." In thus doing we defer to the analogy of the faith, but agreeably to this un-

exceptionable canon of criticism, that "such passages as are expressed with brevity are to be expounded by those where the same doctrines or duties are expressed more largely and fully."

16. Those who underrate the evidence that is afforded by the analogy of the faith, should be careful lest in so doing they may sometimes set aside what, in all sound philology, is reckoned the clearest and most conclusive of all evidence, even that which is struck out by the comparison of kindred passages; and which proceeds on the supposition, no vain one surely when inspiration is in the case, that the author is consistent with himself. The analogy of the faith resolves itself into the analogy of like passages, from the comparison of which some one doctrine or article of the faith has been evolved. It seems evident to me that Dr. Campbell never speaks of a system of divinity without the lurking imagination that there must always be something of human invention in it; whereas such a system may be as much grounded on observation as are any of the specific results of Scripture criticism. Only grant that by observation we take note of the likenesses or relations of things, as well as we do of the specialities of things, and there may be just as little of the speculative or the gratuitous in system as there is in the most rigid conclusions of a critical or a grammatical argument. A system of faith may be the result of a process strictly observational; and by setting aside the analogy of such a system, or of such a faith, you may be setting aside the best evidence which can be adduced in support of many an interpretation.

17. They who, like Dr. Campbell, can never think of systems in theology, but they continually associate the idea of human invention with them, should remember that the relations between the objects are as much within the limits of any offered scene of contemplation as the objects themselves are. We have not become acquainted with all that is within, by merely attending to these objects in their individuality; we must further attend to the relations and resemblances that are between them. Now, it is with this latter that systematic theology is conversant. It originates and invents nothing of its own. It but classifies that which is submitted to it: so that all its doctrines are gathered from the record—all its generalities have their *locum standi* within the four corners of the Bible. A diagram in mathematics contains within its periphery, not the individual lines only, but the proportions or the equalities between them; and

the geometrical reasoner, in asserting these last, asserts as much the contents of the diagram as when asserting the existence of its separate parts. And so of the systematic theologian. He travels forth of the record no more than the Scripture critic does. What he announces is not fetched *ab extra*, but is the result of a busy internal examination; is not the product either of fancy or observation employed on things which are without, but is the product of diligent combination and comparison employed on things which are within. A system in theology is not a superinducement on the Bible, but an envelopment in, or at most a germination from it.

18. However, it is not the idea of invention alone which explains the whole of this antipathy to theological systems. They are further regarded as the offspring of illiberal sectarianism. To meet this prejudice, I cannot do better than present you with the following admirable remarks, taken from Moses Stuart's "Ernesti," in which I fully acquiesce:—"Very much has been said, both for and against the analogy of faith as a rule of interpretation. I may safely add, that on this subject, as well as on many others, very much has been said amiss for want of proper definitions. What is the analogy of faith? It is either simply *scriptural* or sectarian. By scriptural analogy, I mean that the obvious and incontrovertible sense of clear passages of Scripture affords a rule by which we may reason analogically concerning the meaning of obscure passages, or at least by which we may show what obscure passages cannot mean. For example, God is a spirit, omnipotent, supreme, the governor and creator of all things, &c., are truths so plainly and incontrovertibly taught in the Scripture, that all the passages which would seem to represent Him as material, local, limited in His knowledge and power, are to be interpreted agreeably to analogy with the former truths. The same thing holds true of other doctrines taught in the same perspicuous manner. We explain what is doubtful or obscure by the application of what is plain. This rule is not appropriate to the Scriptures only: it is adopted by all good interpreters of profane authors. It is a rule which common sense prescribes, and is therefore well grounded."—"If the question then be asked, whether *scriptural analogy of faith* is the rule of interpretation? the answer must be readily given in the affirmative. But the analogy of the faith or creed of any party of Christians, taken without abatement, cannot be applied as a rule of exegesis, unless it be assumed that the whole creed of that

party is certainly correct."—"The analogy of party faith cannot be our rule of interpretation."

19. You will perceive more clearly the use of system in the elucidation of Scripture, by pondering well the difference between the two questions, "What is the meaning of a given passage?" or, "Is this the meaning of it?" In the prosecution of the former, which is the more general question, you launch forth on a wide ocean of indefinite possibilities, and may wander in trackless uncertainty without ever coming at a clear or satisfactory determination. In the prosecution of the latter or restricted question, you concentrate, as it were, all the forces of your inquiry on a single point; and even though in doing so you should falsify the supposition which you had hoped to substantiate, another system, obtained by some slight or perhaps material variation upon the former one, will suggest another supposition; till by a succession of trials, each of which had some distinct or definite object in view, you arrive much sooner at a conclusive and sound interpretation than when, dismissing all the lights of analogy or general principle, you had no system, whether matured or in embryo, to pilot you on your way. It is thus, we are persuaded, that system has speeded inconceivably the march of Scripture criticism. It has led, more particularly, to a far closer and more frequent confronting and cross-examination of kindred passages, to a busier comparison of scriptural things with scriptural. And if it be true, that an author can best explain himself, or that the Bible is its own best interpreter, then the harmonies of system, if not the fittest proofs upon the question, do at least send the question to the fittest tribunal, by pointing as they do the inquirer's way to the harmonies of the word.

20. The two, in fact, to use a familiar phrase, the two—that is, Scripture criticism and systematic theology—are constantly working to each other's hands. The most splendid example of a process analogous to this in science is Newton's law of gravitation, when the general doctrine and the observation of special phenomena acted and reacted so powerfully on each other. There can be no doubt, in the first instance, that the promulgation of the law gave rise to many thousands of observations, which might never else have been suggested, and that with a view either to refute or to confirm it. And, in the second instance, the confirmation which it met was nearly universal; and indeed entirely so within the limits of accessible nature, with the ex-

ception of one solitary but rebellious phenomenon which defied for a century all the efforts of mathematicians to reduce it to a harmony with that great principle which subordinated to itself all the other planetary movements. Meanwhile the law, beauteous and magnificent, if only universal, had the burden of this exception laid upon it. The love of system, and the love of generality, were kept, *pro tanto*, in abeyance. It was in the very essence of Lord Bacon's philosophy so to defer to the prerogatives of observation, that so long as it furnished even but one refractory appearance, this was held in arrest of a judgment that would have else been absolute and co-extensive with all truth. It required the humility, as well as the hardihood of a thorough experimentalist to resist the fascination; but nobly at length was it rewarded. After the suspense of two or three generations, the Newtonian system was at length evolved out of this last and only difficulty which adhered to it. By the calculations of Laplace, the exception from the law has been demonstrated to be an exemplification of the law. Till this reconciliation was effected, philosophers, true to the inductive spirit, submitted to all the mental uneasiness of this abatement or obscuration of a great principle, and refused to the sublimest generality of nature the place which it has now attained of an absolute and universal category. Now, it stands first and foremost among the articles of their orthodoxy; but they would not, and could not, recognise that position of supremacy which it at last reached, till they had fully acquitted themselves of the supreme homage which is due to the lessons of observation.

21. I bring forward this fine example, because it serves to illustrate the high prerogatives of Scripture criticism, and the deference which systematic theology should render to it. In the Bible there are materials for system, just as in nature there are materials for science. But in both, it should be our first and highest principle to see that we employ the very materials which either the one or the other has put into our hands. It is for observation to determine what the materials are in the former. It is for Scripture criticism to determine what the materials are in the latter. In our fondness for generalities, we may often feel tempted by the semblance of a harmonious system in the Bible to the premature adoption of it. And it may happen as the fruit of our persevering researches, that the semblance may brighten towards certainty. But ere the certainty is conclusively attained, it is our part patiently to wait the further elucidations

of Scripture criticism; and instead of permitting the speculation to outrun the evidence, we should treat the dogma as we would a prisoner upon his trial, so long as there is one impracticable text, which, with all our lights of erudition and philosophy, still appears to stand in its way. And let us not be fearful of the consequence. The systems of science in modern days, even limited and corrected as they are by the findings of experience, how much fairer to look upon, how infinitely more graceful and glorious, even when merely viewed as spectacles of tasteful contemplation, than are all the theories of the schoolmen. The reason is obvious. What we actually find is the solid archetype of those conceptions which are in the mind of the Deity. What we ourselves fancy, is but the shadowy forthputting of those conceptions which have arisen in the mind of man. The one is the product of that taste and wisdom which are in the mind of the Creator; the other is the product of that taste and wisdom which belong to the creature. Hence it is that the Planetarium of Sir Isaac Newton is altogether so much more sublime, yet so much simpler a harmony than the Planetarium of Descartes, or of Tycho Brahe, or of Ptolemy. And what philosophers have realized in nature by not deserting the guidance of observation, theologians will realize in revelation by not deserting the guidance of criticism. They will reach to far loftier contemplations by simple faith in the words of God, than by accompanying man in his sublimest flights of speculation; and while scrupulously adhering to the informations of the Bible, they will at length attain such a view of its doctrines as shall unite the magnificence of theory with the solidity of truth.

22. It is thus that systematic theology and Scripture criticism go hand in hand. If the one be said to fabricate, it is only with the materials which the other furnishes. Its fabrications are not the products of fancy: they are only classifications made on the findings of observation, and such classifications, too, as are made on the observed resemblances which obtain between these findings. The functions of systematic theology and Scripture criticism are distinct; yet assuredly the one is as much an observer as the other is. If the one observe the existence and nature of individuals, the other observes their relations and resemblances. The work of a systematic theologian is throughout an experimental process, beside having the firmness of an experimental basis to rest upon. When a system is said to be fabricated, the very term begets antipathy against it. It

is felt as if to fabricate were to create; but systematic theology, when rightly conducted, creates nothing. It does not excogitate —it explores. It proceeds not by invention, but discovery; or if ever chargeable with invention, it is but the invention of devices, which, like the instruments of science, might enable the inquirer to prosecute the work of discovery with greater effect. The doctrine of the atonement in Scripture is as little a thing of invention, and as much a thing of discovery, as the doctrine of gravitation in nature—the one grounded on a multitude of proof-passages, each of which had been verified by Scripture criticism—the other grounded on a multitude of phenomena, each of which had been verified by observation. And here it occurs that a system, even though designated by the name of its human inventor, though, in one view, the production of man, may be as much the production of God as any of the individual and substantive realities which, by His creative power, He has called into existence. The Newtonian system was the work of God, though the discovery of Newton; and so a theological system may be the work of God, though the discovery of man. When one says that he will draw his theology, not from Calvin, but from the Bible, he may, under the guise of a great and undoubted principle, have been prompted to make such an utterance by as irrational an imagination, as when one says that he will draw his astronomy, not from Newton's Principia, but from a direct view of the material heavens. The one is, or ought to be, as much an interpreter as the other: Calvin an interpreter of Scripture, both in its texts and in its generalities—Newton an interpreter of nature, both in its phenomena and its laws. Should the one forsake the guidance of observation, let him be disowned; should the other forsake the guidance of Scripture criticism, let him be equally disowned. What we expect from both is a system, but an observational system, not a gratuitous theory. Newton has fulfilled this expectation. He has presented us with a system, but in the construction of it, I should rather say, in the evolution of it, he, from first to last, acted in the spirit of a strict experimentalist—he, from the outset resisting the fascinations of theory, set himself down among the multitudinous facts and phenomena which nature offered to him, till order emerged out of the apparent confusion, and a magnificent harmony at length arose from the midst of a variety which looked at the first as bewildering and impracticable as the intricacies of a chaos. How came it that, by the toilsome path of observa-

tion, this submissive scholar arrived at a system more beauteous, and noble, and greatly more regaling both to the intellect and imagination of man than did any of his ambitious predecessors, who devised and excogitated at pleasure. The reply is obvious. Their system is but the archetype of the conceptions of men, his the archetype of the conceptions of God. The one is an ideal of the human mind evolved by speculation into a philosophic theory, the other is the primitive idea of the divine mind evolved by creative power into a living and substantive reality. The difference here is between the finite and the infinite—between what God has made and what man would have made—between the forms of excellence and beauty devised by the creature, and which he has excogitated into a work of his own fancy, and those surpassing forms of excellence and beauty which God has matured into the work of His own hands. And the same difference which has been realized in science, when man gave up his lofty imaginations, and betook himself to observe and study the actual creation, will be realized in theology, when man, dismissing every presumption of his own, betakes himself to the study of the actual revelation. The part of man is to be an humble interpreter in both; and a system alike comprehensive and sublime, in the moral as in the material world, will be the result of his labours. In each the glory that is discovered greatly overpasses all the glory that could have been imagined—just as the Planetarium of Newton exceeds the Planetarium of Descartes or Ptolemy. When Newton, abjuring all the brilliancies of human invention, gave himself up at the outset of his labours to the drudgeries of a patient observer, he was amply rewarded at the termination of them by the view of those glorious symphonies which be in the work of God. In the business of interpretation, there is to the same sacrifice of all antecedent theory a nobler reward in the still more exquisite and glorious symphonies of the word.

23. You now understand, first, the use of hypothesis as a guide, in the work both of observation in science and of interpretation in Scripture; and afterwards, the entire submission of that hypothesis to the results, whether of observation in the one, or of interpretation in the other. It has been asked, whether, as in the instance just alleged, when a refractory phenomenon stands in the way of a general law in philosophy—whether, should a refractory text stand in the way of what, but for it, might have been announced by the unanimous consent

of all Scripture as a general doctrine in theology, our faith in that doctrine should be meanwhile held in abeyance? In the treatment of this question a distinction which has been already made must again be adverted to. A general law in science is gathered from the contemplation of like phenomena; and it is by the very expression of this likeness that the law is announced to us. A general doctrine in theology rests, no doubt, on the concurrent authority of a number of like texts; but each of these texts may in itself, either directly or by implication, afford a full evidence and give full expression to the doctrine in question. It is not with the phenomena of nature as it is with the proof-passages of Scripture. One unlike phenomenon does not contradict another. One unlike text may; and a decisive example of such a contradiction would create a painful embarrassment in our minds on the consistency and authority of the record. Whenever the semblance, then, of a contradiction should occur, Scripture criticism, both emendatory and interpretative, should be called in to ascertain, first, the state of the readings, and then the sense of the reading. It forms one of the most glorious securities of our faith, that in proportion as these labours are extended, these difficulties vanish; or if yet they have not wholly disappeared, may, at least in all that is important, be satisfactorily disposed of by the following canons, held to be of undoubted authority, by the greatest masters and judges of sound interpretation:—"No doctrine can belong to the analogy of faith which is founded on a single text, for every essential principle of religion is found in more than one place."—"The analogy of faith ought to be collected from, or the tenor of Scripture ascertained by, such passages as are plain and clear and expressed in proper terms, not from such as are doubtful, obscure, ambiguous, or figurative, which ought to be explained by these others."—"In framing the analogy of faith, all the plain texts relating to one article or subject ought to be taken together, impartially compared, the expressions of one of them restricted by those of another, and explained in mutual consistency; and that article deduced from them all in conjunction."—Gerard's Institutes, pp. 160, 161.

24. But before I am done with the analogy between the methods of theology and general science, let me present you with the following extract from Playfair's Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory—a book of great eloquence, and replete with sound observations on the right method of philosophizing, though, per-

haps, like some of the works of Bacon, not in itself the happiest exemplification of it. In what he says of theory and observation, you will not fail to discern the respective functions of systematic theology and Scripture criticism, with their influences on each other. The truth indeed is, that, in physical inquiries, the work of theory and observation must go hand in hand, and ought to be carried on at the same time, more especially if the matter is very complicated—for then the clue of theory is necessary to direct the observer. Though a man may begin to observe without any hypothesis, he cannot continue long without seeing some general conclusion arise, and to this nascent theory it is his business to attend, because, by seeking either to verify or to disprove it, he is led to new experiments or new observations. He is led also to the very experiments and observations that are of the greatest importance, namely, to those *instantiæ crucis*, which are the *criteria* that naturally present themselves for the trial of every hypothesis. He is conducted to the places where the transitions of nature are most perceptible, and where the absence of former, or the presence of new circumstances, excludes the action of imaginary causes. By this correction of his first opinion, a new approximation is made to the truth; and by the repetition of the same process, certainty is finally obtained. Thus theory and observation mutually assist one another; and the spirit of system, against which there are so many and such just complaints, appears, nevertheless, as the animating principle of inductive investigation. The business of sound philosophy is not to extinguish this spirit, but to restrain and direct its efforts." It is this use of hypothesis which led Mr. Playfair to qualify the following sentence of Bergmann :—" Observationes veras quam ingeniosissimas fictiones sequi præstat; naturæ mysteria potius indagare quam divinare." " Such an opposition," says Mr. Playfair, " between the business of the theorist and the observer, can only occur when the speculations of the former are vague and indistinct, and cannot be so *embodied* as to become visible to the latter." Finally, " the want of theory does not secure the candour of an observer, and it may very much diminish his skill."

25. From what has been said on the whole of systematic theology and Scripture criticism, you will be at no loss to perceive how it is that in a common translation all the materials of the system are to be found; and that therefore the lessons of systematic theology lie within the reach of an ordinary peasant.

We do not say that he is in circumstances to defend them, if controverted; but he is in circumstances to acquire them. It is just because the component parts of a system, instead of being to be found in isolated passages, lie scattered over the whole record, and are of frequent occurrence, that the translation of the places which contain them is, generally speaking, far more correct than of those other places where the topic, by its very insignificance, is not admitted among the dogmata of a system or the articles of a creed. The system, in fact, is gathered, not out of the obscurer, but out of the clearer passages of Scripture; and hence it is, that though untaught in its original languages, there are thousands of humble Christians who can discern throughout the Bible a reigning evidence for the orthodoxy which they have learned in compends and catechisms. They have to take upon trust the individual sayings of the Bible; but they do not need to take upon trust the theology which arises out of them. This explains the phenomenon of so many sound and really sagacious theologians in common life, with a theology, too, not of implicit faith, but a theology of well-exercised intellect. It is true they cannot carry an appeal from the version to the original; but if there be truth in our principle, in all that is most important and most entitled to a place in the system, the version and the original are surest to be at one. In their reasonings they may be said to take their departure from a lower point than do the learned; but it is a point which has been rightly fixed, if not by themselves, yet by others for them, and so they come to the right place of arrival at last. The assertions of Michaelis and others, in regard to a profound acquaintance both with the original and their cognate languages, as an indispensable prerequisite to a sound systematic theology, would need to be greatly qualified—or rather, I would say, are fundamentally erroneous. It is just saying that a museum, though replenished with specimens of all the genera and all the species, does not contain materials sufficient for the system of natural history, because many of the singularities of nature, or *lusus naturæ*, are not to be found in it. The services of a profound and accomplished linguist may be required for overtaking the curious and else inaccessible rarities of Scripture; but long ere a philology so arduous as his must be called for, all the important generalities of Scripture may, by dint of a less subtle philology, have been completely appropriated. It is under the guidance of the latter, in fact, and not of the former, that most

of the popular versions in Christendom have been executed; and we again repeat, that, by their means, all the weightiest and most substantial lessons of the Bible have been brought within the reach of the popular understanding. We mean not lessons for practical guidance alone; but those lessons which serve as materials for the formation of a just and comprehensive theory in religion. We greatly mistake the native capacities of the human spirit, if we think not that in the heart of an unlettered workman there may exist both a perception of the truth and greatness of such a theory, and a relish for all its harmonies; nor does it seem inexplicable to us, and on the principles of a strict philosophical estimate, that many a ploughman in Scotland is a better theologian than many a critic and philologist in Germany.

26. I fear that I may have expatiated at a length which some of you may have felt to be excessive and intolerable, on the respective functions of Scripture criticism and the systematic theology. You must now, I think, perceive the distinction which there is between them; and how, while it is the office of the one to fix both the state and meaning of every sentence in the record of inspiration, it is the office of the other to sit in judgment over the whole subject-matter of the record, and to gather from it both its important truths and the relations in which they stand to each other. It is not to palliate any kind of ignorance, but to render accurately what the truth is upon this subject, when I affirm it to be a mistake that one unskilled in Scripture criticism must on that account be proportionally unskilled in systematic theology. In the first place, one, without entering very far into the depths of criticism, might master the acquisition of all truths which are important enough for being admitted into the system; and, in the second place, he could, in the exercise of his distinct vocation as a systematic theologian, proceed, with a perfectly wise and warrantable confidence upon the results, which, whether in the discovery of what is minute or the defence of what is momentous, the profound criticism of others has put into his hands. The services are not the same, nor yet are the powers for the execution of the services. One able and accomplished to the extreme in theology, may be deficient in the grasp and generalization which are essential to the construction of a system that shall blend into one harmonious whole the objective revelation of Heaven with the subjective human nature upon earth to which it is addressed;

and this has been too well exemplified by the licentious speculatists in Germany. On the other hand, one may, in virtue of those comprehensive and philosophic faculties which signalize him above other men, be labouring in his most appropriate employment when building up a science or a system out of such materials as are but the results of Scripture criticism—even though they are results which he has assumed on the faith of other labours than his own, because not at leisure and perhaps even not able to work them out himself. The two vocations are as distinct as are those of the observationist and the philosopher in science; and it is really not the way to advance the interests of theology—it is the way rather to bereave it of the advantage which all other learning derives from the division of employment, thus to blend and confound together such walks of intellect as are best prosecuted apart, by men who realize in each such appropriate tastes and talents as, in the wise distribution of nature, are generally found in their highest excellence when separated from each other. There is one immediate good that would result from an enlightened view of this subject. It would disarm of their mischievous authority the men who, on the strength of their intimacy with letters, and characters, and vocables, and the various points of criticism alone, hold themselves entitled to sport any doctrinal fancy that some meagre analogy with some of the rare and recondite instances of expression, whether in the original or cognate languages, might seem to authorize. My chief reason for desiderating the very highest acquisitions of sacred criticism in our Church is, that we may always have defenders at hand able to overmatch and to quell this wantonness, and to exhibit how slender the materials are which go to sustain the innovation in question, when compared with the solidity and superabundance of those materials on which there rests the established orthodoxy of our land. Let Scripture critics be met on their own ground, and combated with their own peculiar weapons; but let it ever be remembered, that theirs is a vocation altogether distinct from that of the systematic theologian. On this subject Michaelis is inconsistent with himself—when at one time he holds forth a profound acquaintance, not with Greek and Hebrew alone, but with Chaldee, and Syriac, and Arabic, and the rabbinical writings, all as indispensable to the formation of a sound theologian; and at another time says of Dr. Whitby, that he was a bad critic though a good commentator. Now we do not inquire into the justness of either cha-

racteristic, as applied to Dr. Whitby; but most assuredly the two are not incompatible. One may be unable to determine the question for himself, whether the sayings wherewith he is presented in any given translation do accurately represent the original sayings of the prophets, and apostles, and evangelists of sacred writ; and yet be far better able than he who can determine the question for the intelligent or the scientific treatment of the sense or subject-matter that has thus been submitted to him. And if a bad critic may be a good commentator, it is equally true that a good critic, in the philological sense, may be a bad commentator; and he must not only be able to assign the meaning of a separate text on grammatical principles—he must be able to re-assemble, to combine, and to educe out of many texts the common truth which pervades them, and its place or relation to the other truths of a comprehensive scheme, ere he can realize the aphorism that—"Bonus textuarius est bonus theologus."

SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

PART I.

ON THE DISEASE FOR WHICH THE GOSPEL REMEDY IS PROVIDED.

CHAPTER I.

REASONS WHY MAN'S STATE OF GUILT AND MORAL DEPRAVATION SHOULD FORM THE INITIAL DOCTRINE OF A SYSTEMATIC COURSE ON THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. We now pass from the evidences of Christianity to its subject-matter—from the credentials to the contents of that volume which is the record of its various revelations—from the question of who the letter comes from? to the question of what the letter says?

2. The doctrines of this volume are presented to us in a miscellaneous form. Its didactic, its narrative, its hortatory, and devotional parts, whether in whole pieces or in occasional passages, are laid before us without any very obvious principle of arrangement, save (and that not always) the chronological order in which the events that are described did occur, or in which the several compositions were written. This being the case, it is not by any exposition, however clear, of the successive portions from Genesis to Revelation that we shall attain, or even approximate, to the formation of a theological system, any more than we can be said to have attained to the science or sciences of the material world by a description in the order of their position, of the individual objects which lie scattered in a way, if we may thus speak, so capricious and incidental on the panorama of visible nature. We can have no doubt that there is a design, a real meaning, though deeper than we can trace it, in the actual order

and distribution, whether of the things in God's world, or of the truths in God's word; and that as the former are best distributed for sustaining the functions and enjoyments of the natural life with all who dwell on the face of our earth, and who compose the whole of our animal generations, so the latter are best distributed for sustaining the functions and enjoyments of the spiritual life with all who aspire from earth to heaven, and who compose the devout, and diligent, and every-day readers of our Bible. Yet as this in the one case does not supersede the work of methodizing the phenomena of nature, so as to frame a philosophy out of them, so neither in the other does it supersede the kindred work of methodizing the sayings of Scripture, and so as to frame a science or system of theology. And accordingly, this latter achievement has long been the task and endeavour of the learned in divinity, and that from a very early age in the history of our Church. Perhaps the creeds or compends of doctrine which were formed in these times, though consisting of but a few articles or *capita fidei*, may be quoted as the first examples, as the embryo or rudimental attempts at the formation of systems which were afterwards expanded into the fuller and more orderly digests of our modern day.

3. In the work of systematizing the truths and doctrines of this volume, the first that we select from amongst them is that of man's moral depravity. We hold this to be the best and fittest object for your primary consideration, and that for the three following reasons.

4. First, Christianity is a remedial or restorative system. Its Author came into our world to seek and to save that which is lost. The great design of His enterprise is to recover our species from the moral disease under which they labour; and it seems natural, in the study of such a process, that we should take a view of the disease, ere we attend to the properties or the power of that remedy which has been provided for it. In point of experience, we shall find that a previous acquaintance with the one will lead the way to a better and fuller acquaintance with the other. In particular, if there be any complication in the disease, if it consists of several parts, as we shall soon see that it actually does; by our previous knowledge of the parts, we shall learn all the more quickly and correctly the counterparts to these in the remedial application of the gospel. The adaptation of the one to the other—of the objective to the subjective, will elicit an evidence, perhaps the most influential of all for the truth of

Christianity. What we propose is, that your first study shall be of the subjective—after which, you will be in better circumstances for understanding the nature of the objective that has been applied and is altogether suited to it.

5. Secondly, There is another reason for the priority which we now advocate. The subjective is near at hand : it lies within the domain of our own immediate consciousness. If the depravity of our nature be a doctrine of the Bible, it is also a doctrine of which we can take cognizance by a direct and independent observation of our own. It is a truth shone upon by the conjunct lights of nature and revelation ; and it seems fit, in passing from the study of the natural to that of the Christian theology, that we should begin with those parts of the latter in which we are not yet altogether abandoned by that light which formed our only guidance in the study of the former. It is like making our study of the terrestrial take precedency of that which is celestial. The one is within our reach. The other may lie partly too within the limits of our more dim and distant vision, as is evinced by the discoveries or even the guesses, which in the exercise of our own unaided faculties we are enabled to make, both of the being and character of God. But beyond these, apart from revelation, seen hazily and imperfectly at the best, there lie other truths which had to be fetched from afar, far beyond the ken of human eye, or even the conjectures of human wisdom ; and for the knowledge, nay, for the very conception of which, we are indebted to revelation. And we again repeat, it seems in every way better that we should not begin with these remote and inaccessible themes ; inaccessible, we mean, till revelation had opened up for us a way to them : but that we should keep by the light of nature as far as that light will carry us, even though it should accompany us a certain way within the domain of scriptural truth, and bring us into converse with certain doctrines in favour of which both Scripture and observation give their respective testimonies.

6. And to explain more particularly how it is that nature can see with its own eyes what the Bible tells respecting the guilt and depravity of man, it is conceivable, speaking generally, that some of the statements in this book might relate to matters whereof man had an antecedent and separate knowledge of his own ; and if this could anywhere be looked for, it would be in those averments which the Bible makes of the human state and the human character. For, first, man has, anterior to revela-

tion, a certain knowledge of the *quid oportet.* He has the sense, and to a great extent the just perception, of what he ought and what he ought not to be or to do—in other words, he feels and is aware of the distinction between right and wrong. So that even though he had but the conjectural or dimly probable notion of a Creator—still, in virtue of his moral nature alone, and without being told of it in a message from heaven, he can feel what is due to a hypothetical God—a feeling which has in it more or less of a practical reality in proportion as this impression of a Deity approaches to certainty or conviction. And then, apart from revelation, no one will question that man has a large and independent knowledge of the *quid est;* and surely this knowledge will not altogether fail him when it relates to a matter so near at hand as his own felt and familiar nature, or to the matters which lie within the homestead of his own consciousness. We have already seen that he has some, we think a very considerable, knowledge of what he owes to God. This belongs to the category of the *quid oportet.* And has he not also a like knowledge of the question, whether what he thus owes to God be or be not actually rendered by man, and in particular by himself? This belongs to the category of the *quid est.* Of the one question it is his conscience which informs him. Of the other question, it is his consciousness which informs him; and, by dint of these faculties alone, he can tell whether or not it be true—that, falling short of duty to the God who made and who upholds him, he is the guilty and the depraved creature which the Bible represents him. It is thus that the findings of experience and the informations of Scripture might be felt to coalesce; and another most precious and powerful evidence is elicited from the harmony between them. There is many a peasant whose faith rests on as firm and legitimate a foundation as that of the most erudite theologian—although with no other stepping-stone for the belief at which he has arrived than his simple discernment of the accordancy which subsists between what the Bible tells him he is, and what he finds himself to be.

7. Our third reason is, that the topic which we now recommend for the commencement of your theological studies, is generally the very topic which first awakens and engages the attention of the inquirer at the commencement of his religious earnestness. We do not want to abandon the scientific treatment of our subject; but we shall ever hold it to be fortunate, and a thing not to be pedantically despised, but to the uttermost valued and rejoiced

in, whenever the scientific is at one with the popular—or when the systematic, as taught in universities, quadrates with the practical, as realized in congregations and parishes. The *quid oportet* and the *quid est*, however scholastically expressed by us, are both of them present and most powerfully operative in many an unlettered mind, which, convinced of sin, is seeking the way after salvation. It is the conviction which gives an impulse to the search, and forms what may be termed the initial force which is brought to bear, and which first tells on the lethargy of nature. It is the originating and motive power which operates at the starting-place or point of departure, when transition is made out of darkness to the marvellous light of the gospel. The minister does not speak of the *quid oportet* nominally, but he speaks to them of it substantially, when he preaches the law; and the law, we know on the highest authority, is the schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ. Neither does he speak to them of the *quid est* nominally, but of it also he speaks to them substantially, when he convinces of sin; or holds up to their own consciousness the glaring deficiencies of their heart and life, from what their own conscience can tell is the rule of duty, or of that obedience which they owe to the rightful Sovereign who, as the Maker, is also the Lord of all things. We egregiously mistake the capacities and apprehensions of the common people —if we think not that a sense of duty, and a sense of the judgment consequent upon its violations, and a sense of their own sinfulness, involving both the feeling of guilt and the fear of danger—if we think not of these moral elements that they are at work and astir in the breasts of the rudest of nature's children. The plainest of all preachers might awaken them with powerful and most wholesome effect in the plainest of all congregations—and this not in the form of a mere sensitive impression, but of a rational and well-founded belief, having all that evidence to rest upon which lies in the adaptation between the truth spoken to them from without, and the testimony of their own responding consciences from within. If men will not seek after a Saviour till awakened by the thought both of a present condemnation and a coming vengeance—then it becomes, not the essential only, but the primary business of their religious instructor thus to awaken them; and we repeat, that with ourselves it is a matter of gratulation that the rudimental lesson in the school of conscience should be also the rudimental lesson in the class-room, or school of philosophy.

8. And let me here take the opportunity of saying, that I am on the whole favourable to a *course* of sermons from the pulpit, though with frequent intermissions of the urgent, and the practical, and the consolatory—whether to cheer the dejected by the assurances of the gospel, or to admonish the converts of their various duties, or to arouse the worldly and the careless from their spiritual slumbers. On these general accounts I would not have the pulpit course to be so rigidly systematic as the university course is or ought to be; and there is one signal exception by which at all times the one ought to be distinguished from the other. I am unwilling that any sermon should be preached without a free and full tender of salvation, through the blood of Christ, to all who will. It might be an inversion of the right and natural order, for me to expound the nature of the remedy, before I had finished my lectureship of many weeks on the nature of the disease. But it is never premature or unseasonable, nor can it be charged upon you as a wrong anticipation, should you seize on every opportunity, and rather create an opportunity than want one, for laying before your people the overtures of reconciliation from God to a guilty world. These from the very outset should hold a prominent place in your ministrations; for recollect that you may have hearers in all the stages and varieties of progress, and some, in particular, already convinced of sin, and in full readiness to be told of the Saviour. And recollect also, that however generally the inquirer is first exercised by the terrors of the law, and then shut up by these to the faith of the gospel, this process is far from being invariable; and that while some need to be driven into the place of refuge by the threats of a coming vengeance, others are more effectually drawn to it by the exhibition of a Saviour's love, and the winning tenderness of a Saviour's invitations. The way of the Spirit in conducting an inquirer from darkness to marvellous light is exceedingly various; and there is a corresponding variety in the history of conversions, and in the whole religious experience of men. Jude seems to advert to this, when he speaks of saving some with fear—pulling them out of the fire; and of saving some with compassion—making a difference. At all events, let the great gospel offer be declared if possible in every sermon, and pressed on the acceptance of all who hear it. It were unpardonable, if, by an adherence to the rigorously systematic in the pulpit, and the exclusion of all that was ulterior, you were to find no place whole Sabbaths together for that great topic, compared

with which Paul was determined to know nothing else—even Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE MORAL STATE OF MAN AS FOUND BY OBSERVATION.

1. We have already said that the character of man is a thing so far cognizable by the light of nature, or by man's own discernment of himself; and if, over and above this, Scripture have pronounced upon it, then we have both the light of nature and the light of revelation shining as it were upon the same subject. Our object is to ascertain the nature and extent of the testimonies respectively given by each—taking first a separate account of them—after which we can better judge of the harmony between them. It will then be seen that at least one great and fundamental article of the Christian faith is established, not by a single witness only, but at the mouth of two great witnesses—first, the Bible which cometh from God; secondly, the conscience of man responding thereunto.

2. We begin with the examination of the latter of these two witnesses. We need not repeat that in virtue of his moral nature, and the faculties which belong to it, man has a certain sense of right and wrong; and that in virtue of his observational faculties, he can tell both of his own conduct and that of his fellows, whether it be conformable to the one, or chargeable with the other. To express it differently, he knows to a great extent the rule of righteousness; and he can perceive of the deeds of man, or of the dispositions which give rise to them, whether they quadrate with or deviate therefrom. He possesses a measuring line, by the application of which he can observe the straightnesses of human conduct, and which he refers to virtues in the human character; and by which also he can observe the unevennesses of human conduct, which he in like manner refers to vices in the human character. There is enough of natural furniture and apparatus in the mind of man for the discernment of these things; and accordingly, antecedent to or apart from revelation, such terms as duty and sin, lawful and unlawful, moral good and moral evil, worth on the one hand, and wickedness on the other, have been familiar as household words, in the

languages of all countries and among the men of all ages, from the beginning of the world.

3. We are aware that before the introduction of Christianity, and still beyond the limits of Christendom, the true God, who possesses a rightful claim on the obedience of all His creatures, is to a great degree misconceived or unknown. But besides the moralities which belong to the relation between God and man, there are moralities which subsist between man and man in society, and respecting which they may either accuse or else excuse one another. The question in how far these are either observed or violated, is altogether pertinent to our present theme; and the right determination of it should help at least to a right estimate of the moral state of our species. And it does speak for a grievous and wide corruption, that on the general aspect of our world there should be so visible, so glaring a deformity—insomuch that the history of the great family of man is little better than a history of human perversities and human crimes. But this is looking vaguely and distantly on the object of our contemplation. We should examine it in detail. We should look to our own familiar neighbourhoods, and to individual acquaintances, and, above all, to ourselves—whether retrospectively to our past doings, or inwardly on our present habits, and dispositions, and purposes—on all or whichever of these fields of observation, we shall not be long of gathering evidence for the sinfulness of humanity. It glares upon us not only in those enormities which call down upon them the vengeance of human law, but in a thousand overt acts besides, which, though not treated as crimes in society, are not the less on that account palpable transgressions of the divine law—and this not merely as expounded and set forth in the Bible, but as interpreted by the law of our own consciences. We stand in no need therefore of making our appeal to the thefts, and the murders, and the other deeds of violence which are punishable by the State, or to the wars, and the wholesale butcheries, and the ruthless desolations, by which, in the great scale of history, the lives and the happiness of millions are sacrificed to the lust of power. We have but to look at the fraudulencies and the convenient disguises, and the competitions of selfishness, stimulated by the appetency for gain, and which are currently practised in the walks of merchandise. Or we may take our stand in the midst of the convivial party, or family circle, and there take account of the slanders, and the jealousies, and the paltry struggles of

vanity for its own pre-eminence; and often the caprices, even cruelties of the household tyrant, whose fierce looks and invectives strike terror into the hearts of those whom it is his duty to cherish with his smiles—to gladden by all the possible acts and amenities of kindness. Or, finally, to shift the contemplation from others to ourselves, let each cast his eye homewards, either to the secret places of his past history, or to those recesses of the inner man which are unknown to all but himself, and then let him say whether he can look over the whole of this perspective with an unabashed sense of rectitude—because there no taint of evil, no one vestige of moral defect or deformity, is to be found. We feel confident that, from one extremity of our earth to another, or from the first creation of man to the present age, no such individual, though the purest and most perfect of his kind, can possibly be fixed upon; or, in other words, that all have sinned—all have come short of entire and absolute virtue. At least, if we have not yet got enough of evidence for the total and universal depravation of our species, there is surely evidence enough against a total and universal rectitude. Should there be a planet rolling in space, a world anywhere, into which evil hath made no inroad, and where all stand alike exempted from remorse and shame, because the morality of all and of each is faultless and without a stain, we shall be spared the burden of any further demonstration, when we simply affirm that this is not that world.

4. But there are certain stern theologians who speak of this degeneracy—not only as universal, that is, extending to one and all of the human family, but as total or complete, insomuch that not one virtue or grace of character is to be found among the sons and daughters of our race, which is worthy of the name. Now, as at present we are in quest only of what is experimentally true upon this argument, we are bound to confess, not that the dogmata of our theological system, but that at least the sayings of certain of our theological writers on the subject of human depravity are not at one with the findings of observation. And we make this admission with all the less fear, that we believe the correction of the language which we deem to be exceptionable, does not weaken, but rather serves to confirm and strengthen the foundations of orthodoxy. Surely then it is rash, and fitted to mislead into a hurtful and wrong impression—as if theology and observation were not at one—when told in a style of sweeping invective, by certain defenders of the faith, that humanity

out and out is one mass of moral putrefaction, and that nought of the just, or the pure, or the lovely, or the virtuous, is anywhere to be found in it. Surely, apart from Christianity, anterior to and distinct from its influence upon men, there are, we do not say in all, but in some, nay, in many, a native integrity and honour, a generous sensibility to the wants and the wretchedness of others, a delight in the courtesies of benevolent and agreeable fellowship, an utter detestation of falsehood and cruelty, a heartfelt admiration of what is right, a noble and high-toned indignancy at all which is fraudulent or base;—these are undoubted phenomena of human character in the world, and that notwithstanding the evasion attempted by those who would fain ascribe them to hypocrisy, or the love of popularity and applause. Though some there be who do put on the semblance of these virtues for the sake of popularity—yet that virtue should be popular is surely in itself the evidence of an honest admiration for it, and that, too, extending to whole assemblages of men. Better this, surely, than if vice and virtue were of like estimation in the world. But we will not reason any further on this hypothesis. Virtue, in thousands of instances, is not a semblance put on for the sake of admiration. It exists as a substantive reality in the hearts and habits of many an individual who does what is right because of a spontaneous preference which impels him to it, and avoids what is wrong because of an unconquerable repugnance, and the moral discomfort which would attend its perpetration. There is a natural virtue upon earth, and without which states and commonwealths would go into dissolution—a social morality, without which society would soon fall to pieces—a scale of character along which the good and the better and the best ascend in upward progression, till, on its loftiest summit, where Socrates and Scipio and Epaminondas and Cyrus stand forth to the admiration of the world, we behold the bright examples of unfeigned worth and honour and patriotism.

5. Now all this might be admitted, and without prejudice to the cause of orthodoxy. To refuse it were a violence done to experimental truth, and so as to revolt alike the judgments as well as the tastes of men. It is thus that theology, or rather some of its rash and precipitate defenders, have created an unjust and most unnecessary offence against its own articles. They have set doctrine and observation in hostile array against each other; and instead of making truth manifest to the conscience, they have reversed this process by placing conscience or intelli-

gent conviction on the one hand, and their own strenuous representation of our nature upon the other, at irreconcilable variance. No two things can be imagined of more opposite character and complexion, than the lessons sometimes set forth in the pages of our controversial divinity, on the right side of the question too, and the lessons as read by many a shrewd and intelligent observer, both in the tablet of his own heart and on the face of general society.

6. It is not, however, the inconsistency of human writers, but the consistency of the Bible with the findings of experience, that we are most concerned about. Nothing can exceed the terms of degradation in which its inspired authors speak of our fallen humanity, telling us at one time of the filthy rags of our own righteousness; at another, of man being conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity; at a third, of the heart being deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; and, finally, instead of a world brightened or at all beautified even by occasional or but transient gleams of the morally fair, and upright, and honourable, instead of making any allowance for the amiable instincts and sensibilities of our nature, they tell, without qualification and without softening, of man having gone altogether aside, and of the whole world lying in wickedness.

7. There is a patent way of clearing up this perplexity. We need only advert to two distinct moral standards—each of undoubted reality and truth of application to the conduct and the characters of men. There is a social and there is a Divine standard of morality. There is a terrestrial as well as a celestial ethics. There is a duty which man owes to his fellows, which, apart from the consideration of Deity, is both recognised and to a great extent observed and proceeded on in society. And, distinct from this, there is a duty which man owes to his God. It is a possible, nay, an actual and frequent thing, for one to be decently, even conscientiously and scrupulously observant of the one, and yet wholly unobservant and wholly unmindful of the other. To our view there are no two things more palpably different than the virtues which belong to the citizenship of earth, and the virtues which belong to the citizenship of heaven; and which every aspirant for that blissful and glorious inheritance should be ever practising as the chief and proper education for a child of immortality. And what we affirm is, that, on the strength of the former virtues, there may be many who are good citizens and good members of society, who yet, in utter destitu-

tion of the latter virtues, have no practical sense whatever of the authority of God, and live without Him in the world.

8. Now it ought to be recollected that the great question agitated in the Bible, and for the adjustment of which the overtures of Christianity have been presented to the world, is not a question between man and man, accusing or else excusing one another. It is a question between God and man. It is God's controversy with His own sinful world which is discussed there, and for which a method of settlement on certain terms is proposed there. We are not to complicate, and far less to identify, two questions which are so distinct the one from the other. The man who deals justly with his neighbour is better than the man who steals from him, but if both be alike heedless or forgetful of God, God has the same reckoning with, and the same complaint, the same remonstrance against both. A social integrity is better than a social delinquency or crime; but if it was not a sense of God's will which prompted the one, any more than a sense of God's will which restrained from the other, then there may be the like irreligion with the performer of each, and God may have one and the same charge to prefer against each —even that He has nourished and brought up children, and they do not care for Him. If theirs be the same degree of ungodliness, then all we contend for is, that theirs also is the same guilt of ungodliness, whatever the difference be in other things —whether, for example, the one have a natural taste for beauty, and the other wants it; or—for there is a perfect identity of principle and conclusion between the two cases—the one have a natural inclination for truth, and the other wants it. We have it in full recollection that God does not command us to love beauty, but that He does command us to lie not one to another; and we are also aware of the delusion which this has given rise to—as if the habit and observance of truth, though altogether founded on an accidental conformity between the man's taste and God's will, made him not only socially better, but also religiously better, than the man who could utter a convenient or gainful falsehood when some sordid interest required it at his hands. But if it be irrespective of God's will that I admire a landscape, and if it be as much irrespective of God's will that I fulfil an engagement or promise, then truly there is as little religion in the one as the other of these doings; and the moral taste in the one instance, the natural taste in the other, may both consist with the same utter and absolute in-

difference to the authority of God. Now, in supporting the charge of human depravity, this last is our great, and the charge could be fully made good though it were our only indictment against the species. We need but to reason upon one count, and that is the count of their ungodliness. We have no interest in denying, and it were most unwise in theologians, because associating with their cause a positive untrueness, to deny that there are constitutional and complexional varieties in the characters of men, and that among these there are social and constitutional virtues in the world. Our single impeachment is, that it is a world lying in ungodliness; and if this is the great master-sin of creatures, that they owe everything to God and give Him nothing in return—then, on this impeachment alone, may the apostolic sentence be vindicated, that ours is a world lying in wickedness—a wickedness the deepest of all, the deadliest of all. We have but to keep by this one article in the indictment. We have but to hinge our controversy or cause upon one question, Whether ours be a godly or an ungodly species? and if indeed it should be found that ungodliness is the practical habitude, the constant and ever-recurring tendency of nature, then, on us lies the monstrous iniquity of owing all and giving nothing; and on God is the monstrous injury laid, that He is robbed of the moral property which belongs to Him in the obedience and affections of His own children. That this is the reigning characteristic of our race may be gathered from the broad and general aspect of society, where, apart from the few whom Christianity has formed into a very peculiar people, each is obviously walking in a way of his own; and without regard to the bidding or will of the rightful Sovereign in heaven, is following after the counsel of his own heart, and after the sight of his own eyes. It may be a way of industry or patriotism or study, or even of benevolence; but unless respect be had in it to the will of God, it is altogether destitute of the religious ingredient, and so is not a way of religion. This, we think, even on a rapid glance of our acquaintanceship, must be the conviction of one and all in regard to the every-day men and women whom they meet with in the world. But we cannot make all men pass under every man's review; and therefore cannot, in the way of induction, prove to every man the ungodliness of all. But we may at least bid each man take cognizance of himself; and far more useful than the general speculation will be the individual finding by each of his own

ungodliness—when, on looking whether inwardly upon his own heart, or back on his own history, both his conscience and his memory can tell how little the sense of God has had to do with either—how much he has been thinking and purposing and acting, and feeling just as he would have done although there had been no belief, and not even the imagination in his mind of a God at all—how, in the great bulk and body of his concerns, he manages to do without any reference in his heart to God whatever; or, in other words, how, in the vast majority of his time and of his doings, he, though upholden every hour by God, yet lives and moves, and has his being in an element of practical atheism.

9. Such is the full bent of nature averted and averse from God. We shall not expatiate on the moral enormity of such a habit and such a disposition on the part of derived and wholly dependent creatures towards the Being who gave them place, and still gives them every moment of their continuance in the land of living men. But we would here advert to a principle of jurisprudence proceeded on in all earthly governments, however little it may have been recognised, still less felt, as of any account or operation at all in the Divine government. It is thus expressed in the Bible—"Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." We might have deferred our consideration of this maxim till we had made entrance on the views and representations given of our moral state in Scripture; but that it is a maxim not only announced there, but consented to in the practice and by the consciences of men. To be treated as a criminal, it is not necessary to have been convicted of more than one crime; and whether it be murder, or treason, or theft, or forgery, any of these singly, though with entire innocence of all the rest, might infer the highest vengeance and last penalty of the law. There may be no disposition or desire for certain guilty indulgences, and hence no temptation to such overt acts as might bring down upon us the imputation of certain species or descriptions of guilt. But if there be one disposition of prevalence strong enough over the authority of law to dare the commission of but one crime, sentence even unto death might justly go forth against it; for while, on the one hand, it says nothing for our loyalty that there should be no transgression, when there is no temptation, on the other hand, it says everything for the general want or weakness of this principle, that when the temptation

comes, the principle is overborne. One does not need to perpetrate all the social offences ere he be dealt with by society as an offender; for by the perpetration of but one in the catalogue, he might rightfully undergo excision from the community of which he has thus proved—most fully and adequately proved—himself to be a worthless and pernicious member. And thus would we meet the extenuations of those who tell us that they do not steal, and do not calumniate, and do not lie, nor spurn away the calls of humanity—enough the simple reply, that they do not love God; and though they should never, in act or in letter, violate any other of the commandments, the first and greatest commandment of all is hourly and habitually violated; or the first and greatest of all the offences in the code or catalogue of all possible iniquities has been repeated by them times and ways without number. And confining our view to this single transgression, we would further consider the argument of those who affirm that they do bear a respect in their hearts towards God. And in proof of this they can appeal to their family and individual prayers—to those services of worship, both private and public, in which they join, and of which God and God alone is the object—nay, often to the affections of their inner, as well as the doings of their outer man, the occasional seriousness of their feeling evincing the undoubted place which God has in their consciences and thoughts. Now grant that they love Him so far that they would like to be well with Him—the question is, Do they love Him in the terms of that precept which announces its own rightfulness—do they love Him with all their hearts? Grant that they serve Him—is it only with a part of their time, and thoughts, and affections? or do they consecrate all to His service—so that whatsoever they do, is done to the glory and the will of God? To liquidate but a part of our debt is surely no exoneration for the whole of it. If one duty be no discharge for another, one part of a duty is no discharge for the yet unfulfilled part which remains. Let this test be applied, and it will be found of the most accomplished, whether in piety or virtue among men, that they too are children of wrath even as others, and that the whole world is guilty before God.

10. But it will be found of those ungodly, who at the same time are more decent and moral than their fellows, that on them perhaps there lies a greater wrath—because in their ungodliness there lies in truth a greater wickedness than in the

ungodliness of those who, destitute of all the natural virtues, are execrated in society as monsters of all profligacy and vice. The men of fair and reputable conduct are not so execrated —nay, may be held in honour throughout their respective neighbourhoods for the uprightness of their dealings, and the largeness of their charities, and all those moralities or graces of good companionship which stand associated with their name. No wonder that their useful and agreeable virtues obtain for them the confidence and applause of society—telling most beneficially, as they do, on the present and worldly interests of the life that now is; and so, in the respect and testimony of all around, the possessors of such virtue may verily have their reward. But all this while God may be out of sight, or rather out of thought; and when His great day of controversy and account comes, there are materials upon which He might hold a severer reckoning, and lay a heavier vengeance on the good than on the bad men of society. However startling this assertion may seem, there is an obvious principle on which it may be vindicated. The truth is, that the ungodliness of the otherwise good is sin in the face of greater obligations. If a larger gratitude and obedience are due when the gifts of fortune are showered down upon us in the good providence of God, surely the same are also due when the gifts of nature are more liberally conferred upon us than upon other men. No one doubts this, when beauty, or health, or vigour are conferred upon our persons, and as little should we doubt this when a healthier or happier temperament is given to our minds. Of the one as well as the other may it be said—what hast thou that thou didst not receive? It is in virtue of an endowment from on high, if ours be a compassion more tender, or ours be a sense of honour more lofty, or ours be a generosity more diffusive, or ours be a greater constitutional delight in the activities and services of benevolence, or ours a more chivalrous and devoted patriotism, or ours a greater inborn taste for the cordialities and the delicacies of social intercourse—so as to elevate and signalize us above the general table-land of that average and every-day and merely neighbourlike character which obtains in the world. These are, one and all of them, so many higher gifts, and so they demand of those who have received them all the higher acknowledgment. If it be of God that I am what I am—then but for Him, instead of breathing in an atmosphere of respect, and living amid the smiles and salutations of my fellow-men, I might have

been compounded by the elements of my constitution into a monster of deformity, and so, an outcast from society, have been sunk in the lowest depths of disgrace and degradation. If we ought to be grateful for every other distinction, surely we ought for that which is the best and greatest of all—or for our larger share of those moral endowments which conduce more than all the other provisions of nature beside, both to the happiness of the individual and the wellbeing of society. Even but for certain desires and dispositions given to the lower animals, as the maternal affection, for example, the stability of their respective species could not be upholden; and not for the stability of their species alone, but for the most precious of their temporal enjoyments, we behold a mental constitution richly furnished with instincts and tendencies of most beneficial operation, as parental tenderness, and compassion, and the love of esteem, and such an admiration of virtue as leads to a certain degree of its observance in ourselves, and draws from us the willing tribute of our applause when exemplified by others;—these are so many properties or laws of our nature, without which no social community could long subsist, but would speedily fall to pieces in a wild war of turbulence and disorder. But it is to the wisdom and benevolence of our Maker that we owe them; and to plead these various instincts and virtues of nature in mitigation of our ungodliness, is more than suffering the gifts of the Most High to seduce our affections from the Giver—it is strangely turning them into arguments for the vindication of our apostasy from God.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE MORAL STATE OF MAN AS AFFIRMED IN SCRIPTURE.

1. The most memorable of all the Bible passages which can be quoted on this subject, occurs in the third chapter of the Romans, verses 10-18. To blunt the force of this testimony, it has been said that it consists of extracts from so many of the older of our inspired writers, taken chiefly from places where they are employed in characterizing, not man in the general, but certain classes or descriptions of men—as the psalmist is when describing his own particular enemies (Ps. v. 8, 9); or those whom he before specializes as evil, or violent, or wicked (Ps.

cxl. 3; x. 7; xxxv. 1); and Solomon in the Proverbs, when he speaks not of the world at large, but of those whom he stigmatizes as sinners (Prov. i. 16); and Isaiah, when he remonstrates with the children of Israel at a period of grossest degeneracy. (Isa. lix. 7). The same, however, can scarcely be alleged of Paul's first quotation in the passage taken from his epistle; for in turning back to the corresponding places in the Old Testament (Ps. xiv. 2, 3; lix. 1), we read the following decisive charges, not against particular groups or bodies of men, but against all under heaven:—"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." But the brief way of meeting this observation is just to affirm what is quite obvious and undeniable—that Paul does borrow this language from the elder penmen of Scripture, for the purpose of enunciating his own express doctrine of man's universal and unexcepted corruption. So that the question which these objectors call upon us to resolve is not, what Paul's meaning is? —that is abundantly clear; but what the use is that he makes of the words quoted by him—whether to prove a doctrine, or to illustrate and embody it? But to quit this place altogether and transfer ourselves to other places, where there is no call for argumentation, and so none of the mist that is raised by it, we have only to go the distance of a few verses, where we meet in Paul's own language with the following decisive statement—that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

2. Citations to the same effect, and equally express, are to be met with beyond reckoning, not only in the epistles of Paul, but in almost all the books of the Old and New Testaments. To begin with a few more extracts from this apostle, what can be more conclusive than the fact that he makes sin co-extensive with death—a fatality which extends to one and all of our species? "So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." There is a like universality implied in the doctrine that all who are born need to be re-born to be made meet for heaven; after which process, they are said to be in the Spirit; but before which process, they are in the flesh. And so we cannot imagine a declaration more comprehensive of all and every of the human race, than that "they who are in the flesh cannot please God." He further tells us of these vile bodies, as if they were all charged with a moral virus, to be freed from

which they must be changed and likened to Christ's glorious body. And he speaks of this present evil world, to be delivered from which Christ gave Himself for our sins—making sin and the world commensurate with each other. And he repeatedly avers that no man is justified by the law, which is tantamount to saying that no man has fulfilled the law, or that all have been guilty of breaking it. The same thing is expressed, when he says that Christ came to redeem them who were under the law; which implies, that they who were under the law stood in need of redemption. We again read, that Christ came to seek and to save them who are lost. Couple this with the affirmation—that they who have Christ have life, and they who have not Christ have not life; and it irresistibly follows, that all who are without Him are outcasts from life; and that the lost, or they who stood in need of salvation, comprehended one and all of the human species. But passing from the inferential to the more simple and direct testimonies, the following are a few of these taken almost at random from various parts of the Bible:—"Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them;" and so "no man is justified by the law," so that all are under a curse.—"We all were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Antecedent to the special work of regeneration by the Spirit of God upon a human being, he is termed in Scripture the old man; and so the brief averment that the "old man is corrupt," tells of a universal and unexcepted depravity.—"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."—"The whole world lieth in wickedness."—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish;" but if repentance be needed by all, then all, anterior to repentance, are in a state of sin.—"There is no man that sinneth not."—"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."—"How much more filthy and abominable is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?" These are a few of the separate and miscellaneous testimonies in the Bible for the doctrine of human depravity. But the whole scheme of Christianity presupposes it; and a stronger impression of it is given when we look to that scheme in its objects, and in the bearings and connexion of its parts, than by any accumulation of distinct and particular sayings, however clearly and unquestionably they express the truth for which we are contending. There are no propositions which stand forth more conspicuously in Scripture than that all men stand in need of salvation;

and that salvation is only needed by sinners, and so all men are sinners. Christianity in its very essence is the religion of sinners; and the sinfulness of all men is the very basis on which the remedial system of the gospel is proposed for the acceptance of the world. It is a revelation of grace unto all men (Titus ii. 11), or of that salvation which is by grace and not of works. That all men should require such a salvation, or that all men should stand in need of grace, is because that in works all men have fallen short of the perfection of the law. All men stand in need of the one salvation, because all men have forfeited and become incapable of the other. That than Jesus Christ there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved, and that all men under heaven have sinned, are correlative truths, and mutually imply each other. If it be through the blood of Christ, a blood of expiation, that all men who get to heaven are saved, then does it follow universally, of them who get to heaven, as of them who are kept out of heaven—inclusive of the whole human family—that one and all of them have sinned.

3. The rudimental lesson of Christianity is to convince of sin. There are various ways in which this conviction might be carried, and he who knows the most of these ways, is the most richly furnished for at least this essential part of the work of the ministry; let it not therefore be deemed superfluous, if we keep by this great lesson, so long as other demonstrations of it occur to us which are yet unexplained, and by which it might be made palpable to minds that perhaps are yet unreached. We have already tried to ascertain in how far the sinfulness of man is deponed to by his own conscience, as informed by the light of nature; and also in how far it is deponed to by some few of the more obvious and explicit testimonies which are given in Scripture; or otherwise, in how far it is shone upon by the light of revelation. But there are certain other aspects in which the subject may be viewed, and in the contemplation of which both conscience and Scripture bear a part. The two lights are blended, as it were, concurrently and responsively; and by their acting and reacting on each other, give rise to a new and striking demonstration. We say new, only in that it may seldom or never have been set forth by those who take a reflex view of our mental processes, and undertake the delineation of them; but not new in point of direct operation or fulfilment on the minds of those who, in possession of good and honest hearts, receive

the word aright, in the devout and diligent reading of their Bibles.

4. The argument which we are now to offer hinges on a difference which obtains between the two mental powers of discovery and discernment. The one is much rarer than the other —the first faculty being that which signalizes the few, while the second is diffused among the many. And so what one man only can discover, thousands of men can discern when once it is set before them. The truths which Sir Isaac Newton first demonstrated and made known, awoke numbers of his own age to the full and intelligent recognition of them, and have now become the common property of hundreds of mathematicians all over the world.

5. Now, what is true of the mathematical is pre-eminently true of the moral. One man might announce a new principle in ethics, or at least the new application of an old principle, which, though till then unheard of, might command the instant assent of all who hear it; and there is this difference between the moral and the mathematical—that whereas in the one, the conviction of a newly presented truth can only be arrived at by the footsteps of a lengthened demonstration, in the other the conviction may arise on the first moment of its utterance, as if in the light of an immediate manifestation. It is thus that a shrewd and original observer might fetch up, as it were, from the arcana of before unexplored truth, a maxim whether of prudence or morality—which, when framed by him into an aphoristic or proverbial saying, is accorded to by all his fellows, as if now perceived by them in the light of its own evidence. And so it is that the conscience of man can be informed, or raised above its former level by a voice of wisdom *ab extra;* and in this way, when a just representation of life and manners is set before us, every page might teem with novelties, whether in the dissertations of the moralist or even in works of fiction, and yet they be novelties which are no sooner read than they are recognised of all men.

6. This indicates one way in which a revelation from heaven, apart from its miracles or its sensible and historical proofs, might be met and consented to by the consciences of men upon earth, and in which certain of its truths, though enunciated for the first time in the world, might nevertheless be the objects of an intelligent conviction, as if radiated on the mind from a native or inherent brightness of their own. If it be true that what one

man only can discover, thousands might afterwards discern in the light of their own understanding—then may it be true that what no man could discover, might, after that the revelation has been made of it, become the object of discernment to millions, and that too in the light of their own understanding. It is thus, in particular, that the moral judgments of men might be raised and rectified to a degree that never was, and perhaps never could have been, realized apart from revelation—which revelation, not by its reasonings but by its naked statements alone, may have both purified and exalted not only the ethical systems of the learned, but the ethics of general society. We might here illustrate our argument by the golden rule, as an example of it—that we should do unto others as we wish others should do unto us, first propounded by our Saviour, but admired even by the heathen, and commending its own equity to the consciences of all. No one had framed this precept before the time of Jesus Christ, yet all men assent to it, at least in judgment, whether or not they follow it in practice. It is altogether a precept of the same character, the same at least in kind, though at first it may appear to be of a higher and more comprehensive nature, when told, in the terms of the second law, "To love thy neighbour as thyself." And yet the reason and conscience of man might be sufficient, one would think, to raise him upward, as it were, from the one to the other of these. Certain it is that we should like all men to love us; and it would enhance the gratification still more that they loved us as much as they do themselves—so that there seems to be nothing more than the equity of the golden rule in the obligation under which our own likings and desires have laid us, that we should love them even as we do ourselves. If there be not the same full and instant coalescence with the second law that there is with the golden rule—there may at least be a preparation, nay an aspiring tendency, towards the more transcendental of these moralities. And certainly, however much the inclinations of selfishness may recoil from a benevolence so exalted, there can be no adverse determination of the moral judgment against it, for we should look on that love to a neighbour which is as great as the love we bear to ourselves, to be the perfection of virtue, the perfection of benevolence—whereas aught beneath this we should regard as short of perfection. And thus it is that this law of love to our fellow-men, though first proposed by revelation in its most superlative form, may yet in this form be largely concurred in by nature, however much it

transcends the powers and all the previous conceptions of nature, so that between the authority of Scripture and the progressive light of conscience, which Scripture itself is so much fitted to expand and illuminate, this high standard of social virtue might come to be acknowledged as the sum and the perfection of that moral excellence, of which this world is the theatre, and the brethren of our species are the objects—insomuch that man's own conscience will at length do homage to this saying of the Bible, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

7. Now, it is when tutored thus far that we are on a high vantage-ground for the conviction of sin. It is Scripture which first holds forth to us its own lofty standard of social virtue. But I trust it has been sufficiently explained why at length it comes to be not Scripture alone, but conscience and Scripture together, which unite in telling how much of love it is that we owe to our brethren of mankind. It is needless to say how immeasurably beneath such an exaltation of charity as this, are all those humanities, and generosities, and kind or companionable services, which are current in this our average and every-day world. Even when carried to such an elevation as greatly to signalize a man for his large and liberal munificence, still how little in measurement is it when compared with the benevolence of God's second law—how light a thing is it when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary. Do we ever see any sensible approximation to a love of our neighbour, as intense, and perpetual, and unwearied as the love of one's-self? or apart from the instinctive affections of relationship, can we point out an individual as jealous of the reputation of an acquaintance, or as careful of the interest and happiness of another, as he is of his own? We have already conceded certain natural virtues to man, and are most willing that they should be reckoned for as much as they are worth in mitigation of man's social imperfection; but small indeed will the mitigation be found on the celestial standard of the second great law. For in the application of this lofty rule must it appear, how vastly beneath the summit of perfection the best and greatest men has fallen—that after his inveterate and inborn preference is for self—and selfishness, a rooted and concentrated selfishness, is the element he breathes in. Whether measured by the will or by the example of the Saviour, the insignificance of all his doings becomes alike manifest on the high scale of the morality of heaven. Under the promptings of a compassionate nature, he may give of the crumbs and fragments

of his substance for the relief of the necessitous. But who so gives as in the least to resemble Him, who though rich, yet for our sakes became poor? or who so loves as He did who poured out His soul to the death for His enemies? It is thus that the higher our conscience or moral sense of the law, the lowlier will be our consciousness of an exceeding distance and deficiency therefrom. Our experience then will be the same with that of the apostle, who without a right notion of the law in its extent, and the law in its spirituality, felt himself safe; but who, when visited with a sufficient manifestation of the law's lofty demands upon him, was at the same time visited with the conviction of his own exceeding sinfulness. This too is a way in which the law acts as a schoolmaster; nor will it be difficult to prove, with but a correct reference to its high and unalterable requirements—that even as social creatures all men are infinitely short of perfection, and so all men are sinners.

8. But, after all, the best method of truly setting forth the state and measure of man's guilt and deficiency, is to set up the true standard of man's incumbent godliness. Even from the social virtues alone, and man's actual violation of them, we can gather the materials of a most emphatic demonstration. But it is when we rise from the social to the sacred that the demonstration becomes irresistible. Instead of the question, how much we owe to our neighbour? let us at once take up the question of how much we owe to God? and then gather, both from a review of our history, and from a reflection on the state of our hearts, how much or how little of what we owe has in very deed been rendered to Him. It is under this charge more especially, under this head or count of indictment, that the Bible so promptly and so powerfully convinces of sin. You will remember Bishop Butler's observation of its being the Bible's great peculiarity, its main and leading characteristic, that it treats the world in the special light of its being God's world; and takes up with men under the special view of their being the subjects or the progeny of God. It is this which distinguishes and sets apart Scripture history from all other history; and we may add, which distinguishes Scripture ethics from all other ethics. Not that there is any opposition of principle between the morality of the Sacred Volume and the morality of enlightened nature; but that the things of God occupy so large a space, or it may be rather said, the whole of the Old and New Testaments—and so the duty we owe to God stands forth there with such a breadth

and a prominency, and in such a presiding character, as signalizes this book from all other authorship. Let us not wonder that in a record where God is set forth as the Sovereign of His own creatures, godliness should also be set forth as the sovereign of the virtues. In this respect the preceptive and the historical are in perfect keeping with each other. If in the one we are told to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and strength, and soul, and mind, that we should worship the Lord our God and Him only we should serve, that we should do all things to His glory—if in these and innumerable like passages we find the constant lesson, the great burden as it were of the preceptive Scriptures, to be God's rightful and supreme authority over man, and so the corresponding and supreme obligation under which man lies of loyalty to God;—then, in the historical Scriptures, what we chiefly read of is, God's controversy with the world—God's remonstrances and threatenings against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men—God's reclaiming calls on the allegiance of His strayed and revolted creatures. And though the wars of nation against nation constitute one of the largest themes of sacred as they do of secular and profane history, yet even these—and it is here where the Bible stands alone—are uniformly represented as the effect of God's righteous judgments, as evolutions of His controlling providence, as parts and passages of the Divine administration. No wonder if on this more elevated platform we shall meet with higher principles and a higher standard of moral obligation—and so as with this original and comprehensive rule of righteousness, to make all the clearer demonstration than we possibly can do on the mere ground of terrestrial ethics, of that greater altitude from which man has so largely and immeasurably fallen.

9. There is even such a natural sense of what we owe to God, that the demonstration to a man's own conscience of his constant and cleaving ungodliness, is, even from the outset of your dealings with an ordinary congregation, one of the fittest instruments that can possibly be wielded from the pulpit for the conviction of sin. We do not say this, as if the moral light of humanity were such that it superseded the need of the Spirit's illumination; but we say, that there are certain embryo and twilight perceptions of right and wrong, and, more especially, of what the creature owes to the Creator, which it is the office of the Spirit, not to reverse, but to enhance and brighten into fuller manifestation—just as the sun, when it emerges from the horizon,

does not transform the dim and dawning objects of early morn, but only makes them more clearly visible than before. It is true that we have greatly duller notions and sensibilities of the law of godliness than we have of the law of justice—insomuch that Paul, when ascribing to all men that law unto themselves, in virtue of which they could justify or condemn each other, spoke even of his own mind, of a very high order though it was, that it was at one time without law, by which he meant that holy and spiritual law which bears chief respect unto God; and so, having little or no sense of its authority, he had, on the principle that where there is no law there is no transgression, a correspondingly little or no sense of his own flagrant deficiencies therefrom. It is thus I understand him when he says, "I was alive without the law once,"—that is, when I had no sense of the law, no sense of the condemnation under which it laid me, and deemed myself safe. But still it was that very law which proved the instrument of his conviction. It was when the law came by the Spirit, no doubt, but still by the Spirit of God shining on the word of God—making him to understand the force and application of the written precept, Thou shalt not covet—then it was that he felt alive to the sense of his own sinfulness, or that sin revived and he died, seeing that his life was forfeited to a broken commandment. And still it comes to the lesson, that by reading what Scripture tells of God's law, or by urging that law in all the breadth and loftiness of its requirements from the pulpit, you are on the patent road for convincing men of sin. The Bible in effect affirms our sinfulness, when it affirms the high demands and prerogatives of a law which every enlightened conscience must feel that we have fallen from. There is not, therefore, a likelier expedient than a close and faithful preaching of the law, for giving success and efficacy to the preaching of the gospel. When made sensible that we should do all things to the glory of God, then are we most susceptible of what I should call the first, for it is indeed the great outset lesson of Christianity, as set forth by Paul in the masterly demonstration of his epistle to the Romans, that in all things we have come short of this glory.

10. It is thus that the ethical system of the Bible, in the very proportion of its loftiness and purity, is so fitted to convince the reader of sin—and just because, if at all enlightened in the knowledge of himself, must he perceive how immeasurably low his moral position is beneath the standard of its immutable and

all-perfect law. Let the Spirit but open his understanding to understand both the word of God and his own character, and there lie within his reach the materials of a most overwhelming demonstration. His conscience will go along with the most humbling representations which are there given of humanity—for there is just the universal consistency of eternal truth, in that the same book which most exalts our view of what man ought to be, should also most depress our view of what man actually is. Accordingly, nothing can exceed the terms of degradation in which the Bible arraigns, nay, vilifies, our nature—charging us at one time with the destitution of all godliness, when it speaks of us as living without God in the world; but, far more monstrous than this, charging us at another time with the direct opposite of godliness, as when it speaks of the carnal mind being enmity against God. Could we but gain the conscience over to these statements of Scripture, the work of conviction would be well-nigh perfected; and man, stripped of every plea or every palliative by which he could at all sustain a dependence upon himself, would become a likelier subject for the calls and invitations of the gospel. The terms of a violated law might all the more readily shut him up unto the faith—because reduced by the sense of his own worthlessness to a thankful acquiescence in the overtures of the New Testament. Let us therefore address ourselves more closely to the examination of these two charges:—that is, of man being not only devoid of godliness, but despiteful toward God.

11. The two charges are distinct from each other. There are many in society whom it might not be difficult to convince that they live without God; but if we were to say, further, that in their minds there existed a positive enmity against Him, their consciences would refuse to go along with us. They are not sensible of any such feeling as the hatred of God in their hearts. They bear Him—at least their own experience of the emotions which pass within their breasts would suggest no such thing—they bear Him no ill-will, no antipathy; and certain it is that they bid Him no express or open defiance. Blasphemy is a thing they would shudder at; and if they would thus recoil from speaking against Him, how can they be said to feel against Him? Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh; and if the heart do rankle, as theologians tell us, with all sorts of repugnance and dislike against God, why do these find no vent from the lips in words of rancorous hostility? Certain it

is, that if between man and man there should break out a controversy, and the heart of the one should tumultuate in fierce exasperation against the other, it would, if nature were given way to, make instant betrayal of itself, in language of fiery and fierce invective. We never by any chance saw any man thus tumultuate and storm against the God who made him; and if ever it should be realized, it were a rare and monstrous exhibition, at which almost all men, instead of sympathizing with it, almost all men would be horror-stricken and revolted to the uttermost. It might be difficult, amid such contradictory appearances as these, to establish by any direct proof, at least to the satisfaction of human consciences, the apostolic charge of nature's positive enmity to God. Even the worst of malefactors, the literal and palpable transgressors of all the commandments, might have something to say in arrest of this judgment. He might allege, and with a certain degree of plausibility too, that when hurried into wickedness by the force of temptation, it is not his hatred of God, but his love of sin, which is the cause of it; and that all the while there is no sensible aversion of his heart toward God, though a very great fondness, he will admit, for the indulgence of those propensities which God hath given to him—nay, so far from any desire of a controversy with God, he would gladly be at peace with Him; for if God would only abstain from any quarrel against him, he would have no quarrel against God, and very glad indeed would he be if on these terms he were fairly let alone. It is thus that even he can parry the charge of having aught like a hostile feeling towards God, or of carrying in his breast any positive wrath or enmity against Him.

12. It is thus, that on the principle of speaking to men as they were able to bear, I would advise, that in dealing with men to convince them of sin, you should postpone the charge of their being against God till you had made good the more practicable charge of their being without God. There are ministers who, by way of parading their orthodoxy, luxuriate in making the most strenuous asseveration of it, and so as often to startle and astonish their hearers, but so, at the same time, as to repel, when they should study rather to carry their understandings. For this purpose, both our Saviour and His apostles went gradually to work—making, as it were, the most cautious approaches to the prejudices of the men with whom they had to do. And it is surely a warrantable calculation, when we find it a

hard task to convince any that in his heart there is aught like a positive malice against God, that we shall perhaps come more home to human consciences when we try to make it out, that in every natural heart there is at least a contentedness, an entire satisfaction and contentedness to be without God—to live without Him in the world. The verdict of *against* may require a longer examination and trial, a longer deliberation ere it can be brought in; but the verdict of *without* may perhaps be sooner and more summarily determined. The reprobate whom we have now quoted, and who would gladly quit all thought whatever of God, if God would simply let him alone—he, though he might plead not guilty to the charge of there being within him aught like a malignant feeling against God, will not deny a thing so palpable to his own convictions, as that he would be quite satisfied to live without God, and be suffered to prosecute his career of vicious indulgence, undisturbed by any sense of guilt, or any dread of a vengeance to come at the hand of an offended Lawgiver. Now, we ask if that which is patent to the conscience of this man—his perfect willingness to be free of God, and without God to enjoy himself in his own way—if it be not alike patent to your consciences, that indeed your habit, too, your prevalent inclination, is just to do in this respect as he does—that is, to live without God, in the prosecution and enjoyment of your own way? We do not say that in all respects you are the same with this criminal—we are far from imagining that your way is his way. We are merely saying of it that it is your own way; and that, in the prosecution of that way, all of you, over whom the gospel of Jesus Christ has not obtained the practical ascendency, are satisfied to live, or at least do, in fact—with the perpetual bias of your hearts, and throughout the great bulk of your history—live without God. You may be as little sensible as he is of any positive antipathy in your minds against God; but ought to feel as sensible as he of the contentedness in your minds to live without God. With all the other differences between him, the atrocious delinquent, and you, the fair and passable, nay perhaps the respectable member of society, there may be no difference in this, that both of you live, and both of you are satisfied to live, without God. I should like each to take account of his own state and his own disposition in this matter; and could it at all help them to the passing of a right sentence upon themselves, it might lead to convince them, that immersed in earthliness, and breathing in no other element than that of

sense and of time, which, apart from God or without God, is wholly and altogether an element of irreligion, they really are not in a state for being borne aloft to the joys or exercises of the upper sanctuary—they really are not in a state which it will do to die in.

13. For this purpose let me allege a few specimens in the way of proof or illustration, and such as the consciences of hearers would be most likely to go along with.

14. Let me first, then, instead of our supposed criminal, fasten on a man of average and every-day character in society—such a one as we meet daily in hundreds upon our streets, or in the walks of ordinary fellowship—a person who divides his time between the sleep which refreshes him, and the food which sustains him, and the work which earns for him the means or materials of his livelihood—one who is not at all to be shunned or execrated as a delinquent, but a very tolerable, companionable, and neighbourlike person, who loves his children or the members of his own household very much as the bulk or the generality of other folks do—keeps up a fair and courteous standing with his acquaintances—pays to all their dues—and, on the whole, makes his way evenly and inoffensively through the world. I would just ask such a person—and I have no doubt there are hundreds of such in many a congregation—that he will just look back on these the wonted stages or cycles of his history, and, taking a review of the thoughts and the feelings and the desires and the purposes that pass all the while in ceaseless and busy succession through his heart, will he just tell me how much or how little of God has been there? I do not wish to overtask his memory, and therefore will not send him over a very wide or extended survey of the years that are past; but to facilitate and abridge the labour of this self-examination, I would rather, if he choose, limit him to the retrospect of a single day; and to fix on the most recent, and so the freshest in his recollection of any, I would bid him take an account of the proceedings of yesterday, and then tell me how much or how little the will of God had to do with them. Was His will thought of at all, or ever once adverted to? Did the principle, to walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing—did this principle give direction to one movement, or impulse to a single footstep in the transactions of yesterday? Was it the history of a self-willed and self-regulating creature, or of a creature ever looking upward from the earth he treads on to his Creator in the

heavens, and subordinating himself in all things to the rightful authority of this sovereign and supreme Lawgiver? Let him tell me, in a word, was it God's will or his will—whether the promptings of his own spontaneous inclination, or the precepts that issue from the throne of God—which of these, we ask, presided, or had the practical ascendency over the whole course and conduct of the very last day which rolled over him? We leave the question to every man's conscience; and if it do bear witness to a godless yesterday, then, although the lights of our own memory should fail, there is a book of remembrance which tells in undying characters if the habit and character of this one day be not of a piece with the habit and character of all our days upon earth: and so the godless yesterday were but the type and representative of a godless past week, a godless past month, a godless past year, a godless lifetime; or that, in other words, from the first breath of our infancy to the moment of the reckoning which we now hold, we may have been living in exile from God, living without God in the world.

15. There are some who try to make their escape from this charge, by telling us that they must give time and thought to their necessary affairs, and cannot always be thinking of God. Our reply is this: Who gives them a right to put asunder the things which God hath joined—to separate religion from the business of life, when the whole drift and design of the New Testament morality is to sanctify the business of life with religion? They would divorce the one from the other; whereas such is the mighty difference between their spirit and the spirit of the Bible, that its distinct aim, as may be gathered from innumerable passages, is thoroughly to impregnate, or thoroughly to leaven and pervade the one with the other. It is not the aim of Christianity, and never was, to annul the business of life, to lay an interdict on shops and markets and manufactories, and farm or family managements, or any whatever of the lawful trades and processes of human industry. True, it claims an entire mastery over all these—not, however, for the purpose of putting an end to them, but to animate them with the right spirit, and direct them to their right end. They, on the other hand, would put off Him who is the Lord of Creation and the continual Preserver of men, with the veriest crumbs and fragments of human existence, in the shape, perhaps, of family prayers and Sabbath services—thus limiting to a mere corner of the domain Him who, as rightful Lord and Proprietor, is right-

ful Governor too over the whole of it. So far from renouncing this right of sovereignty over any part of the territory of human life, I cannot see a single half-hour of it in which God has not both a will and a way for us. Manifold are the Scriptures to which I could appeal in support of this great principle. In one place I find Him telling the field-labourer that he must serve his master not with eye-service, but as doing the will of God from the heart; or, in other words, that he must be as diligent and faithful when his earthly superior is away as when he is present, for that his heavenly superior is still looking over him, and will put down to his own account what he does well for his immediate employer, just as if done unto Himself. In another place I find him telling the household maid that she must not purloin; but, resisting the temptation of open doors, and of all the other facilities which occur for those snug and secret and unnoticed appropriations for which there are so many opportunities under the domestic roof—that she must serve with all good fidelity, and thus adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things. And, so far from religion having nothing to do with ordinary and every-day matters, I see in another place that it tells the mistress of a family to guide her house well, and be a good keeper at home. And again, so far from laying an arrest on the busy operations either of the artisan in his workshop or of the merchant in his counting-house, it proclaims the indispensable duty of each man to provide for his own, and especially for those of his own house, else he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. These are but a few out of the many specimens of the all-comprehensive saying, that whatsoever things we do, we should do all to the glory of God, and in the name of Jesus. It is not God who has exiled from His regards the business of human life, but it is man who would take the business of life out of the hands of God. Our distinct charge is that we have taken this business wholly into our own hands, and have made it to be altogether ours, when properly and rightfully it is altogether His. And we again repeat of one and all who thus walk in the counsel of their own hearts and after the sight of their own eyes, that, prosecuting their affairs as they do, apart from all consideration of God's law or of God the Lawgiver, that they indeed breathe the very element of irreligion, and live without God in the world.

16. It is not for the sake of multiplying our illustrations, but of still more enhancing and confirming the lesson which we are

trying to establish, that we now bid your rise from the contemplation of these commonplace characters, the men and the women whom we most commonly meet with in society, to the contemplation of humanity, though still of natural or unconverted humanity, in one of the finest and most beauteous and most exalted of its specimens. We ask you, for this purpose, to select one of the best and the noblest of our kind whom you ever saw or heard of—the possessor of many an instinctive and sweet-blooded and constitutional virtue, and who, because of these, is not only the joy and the pride of his own family, but the desire of every companionship, and a great public blessing to the town or the neighbourhood of his habitation, and over which he sheds the halo of his presence or of his name. Theology has greatly damaged her own cause, and the credit of her own articles, by denying, or even by overlooking what is so palpable to all experience, as that, apart from religion, and from any practical sense of God in the breast, such characters do exist. We read of them in the classic pages of Greece and Rome, before Christianity was ever heard of. We recognise them in the obelisks of departed worth and departed patriotism all over the land, raised by a grateful community to perpetuate the memory of services in which Christianity had no operation. We hear of them in the frequent notes of gratulation and applause wherewith they are universally spoken of—whether as the munificent landlord; or the liberal and large-hearted citizen; or the senator who, unmindful of his own aggrandizement, consecrates all his energies to the wellbeing and greatness of the country which gave him birth; or the high-minded warrior who, alike free from every taint of selfishness as well as fear, yields up his life a willing sacrifice in defence of his nation's liberties or his nation's honour; or, finally, the generous aspirant after fame in the walks of lofty science or lofty scholarship, from the labours of whose midnight oil there issue the works which elevate the general taste and understanding, or the discoveries which confer innumerable blessings on society. Now, our whole argument hinges upon this, and it is impossible to deny it, that the golden opinions uttered everywhere of these men, might all be earned by nature's powers and nature's virtues alone—without so much as the thought of God, and certainly in the play and exercise of the mind's own principles, without any impulse whatever taken from the consideration of His will; or not because prescribed by His law, but prompted by the spontaneous

inclinations of one's own heart, and bent altogether on the prosecution of one's own way. We dispute not the usefulness, we dispute not the excellence of any of these principles, or the high and honourable estimation in which they should be held by us. They are lovely and of good report. We are not bidding any withdraw their admiration from those fine and natural sensibilities which make one man the most indulgent of masters; or from those honest aspirations after the public weal which make another man the most zealous of philanthropists; or from the warmth of those kindly and companionable feelings whence spring all the courtesies of life, and which make another man the best of neighbours, the light and the charm of every social party; or from those workings of strong instinctive affection which make another man the fondest of fathers, and more exquisite still, when in the lovelier form of maternal tenderness, it watches over the infant's sick-bed, and weeps over the infant's early grave. Who can dispute the reality of these graceful exhibitions?—and where is the stern or repulsive theology which could have the heart to frown upon them—even though the exhibitions of a human nature which theology has stigmatized as charged with a moral distemper, which, however tolerated on earth, makes it wholly unfit for the choirs or the companies of heaven? It is not in any harsh or ungenial spirit that we are now bidding you look at this matter, or bidding you pronounce upon it. We ask you to regard it as you would any experimental question, and give us the calm judgment of your own observation—whether humanity might not feel thus amiably, in all these various ways, and give forth all these beauteous exhibitions, and this without one practical influence descending upon it from the upper sanctuary, or one heaving aspiration towards Him who is throned in supremacy there? This is the only verdict that we are now seeking at your hands—whether nature might not be lovely and engaging in many of her phases, and yet it hold true even of the children of such a nature, that none of them understandeth, and none of them seeketh after God?

17. We shall make no further appeal to your experience on the question of fact, whether it be not the habit of nature, in all her aspects, and under all her varieties of the more and the less lovely—whether it be not the general habit and disposition of this said human nature just to take her own way independently of God? or, which is the same thing, whether the heirs

and partakers of this our nature, do not live without God in the world? Our appeal now is to your conscience, or moral sense, on the question of principle; and we leave it with your own judgments of what is right, to tell how such a habit and such a life ought to be characterized. Remember that the case on which we are now calling you to pronounce is the case of a creature, we shall not yet say who positively hates, but who at least forgets and does not care for the Creator who gave him birth. It is the case of man letting slip every hour from his remembrance and from his regards, all thought of that Being who gives him every breath which he draws, and sustains him throughout every moment of that existence which he holds perpetually at His hands. We bid you consider well the relation in which these two parties stand to each other, and this that you may rightly appreciate the manner in which we the derived and the dependent party, acquit ourselves under it—the relation, we mean, which subsists between Him the continual preserver of men, and us the objects of His care—His eye being constantly directed towards us, while our eye all the while is as constantly averted from our Maker and our God. Will you only think of this simplest, but truly most emphatic of all Bible statements—that in Him we live and move and have our being; and yet that we live as independently, and walk the earth we tread upon with as firm, unfaltering, and assured footstep, as if, our own creators and our own preservers, it was not in Him but in ourselves that we lived and moved and had our being. And then to think how unmoved these hearts are by any consideration of the Giver, while our hands ravenously seize upon His gifts; and we, revelling on the bounties which His providence showers over us, luxuriating amid the beauties which His creation spreads around us, are willing to forego all thought of our Maker would He simply let us alone, and keep away from us that hideous death and that terrific judgment which follows it. Nay, willing, most abundantly willing, would He but stamp immortality on our present being, and make this earth the abode of unfading health and never-ending pleasures—willing in the ceaseless round of this world's prosperous business and merry companionships and festive holidays, and the full enjoyment of every social and domestic pleasure between the cordiality of our friendships abroad and the endearments of a happy and harmonious family at home—willing on these terms to lose all sense of God; and that never once revisited by the thought of a Maker,

He and we should henceforth cut our hold, and be quit of each other everlastingly. It were difficult to estimate aright the enormity, the moral enormity of this deep-laid ingratitude—this atheism of the heart, as it may well be called. Let us figure, we shall not yet say the hostility or the hatred, but the sheer indifferency, amounting to the total and absolute carelessness of an earthly child to the earthly parent who gave him birth, and with unwearied affection and care never ceases to uphold him, and it may help us to conceive more adequately the turpitude of living as we do without God in the world—the deep criminality of a world that has departed from its God.

18. But we have yet only ventured to press home the charge that we live without God, and which, if rendered into one word, we should express by indifference. The charge more heinous and aggravated than the former, not of our being without God, but of our being against God, may also be rendered into one word, even hatred; and which if once fastened and made good, would make us out to be, not the forgetters of God only, but greatly more revolting than this, the haters of God. There are many who will acknowledge themselves to be without, but cannot see themselves to be against God. They hear of it in Scripture, but they do not see it in the light of their own consciences; or in other words, they will plead guilty to the charge of indifference, but not to the charge of hatred. Now we have ever thought that after the one charge is established, then, by a brief and sure process of demonstration, the other can be established also. There is but a single step between the verdict that we are without God, and the still more dread and appalling verdict that we are against God. No wonder that we are not sensible of our hating God, throughout those long and frequent periods of our existence, during which, year after year and day after day, we never think of God. He can have no part in our feelings, whether of love or hatred, so long as He has no part in our thoughts. If we can only manage to keep Him out of mind, then all the while there will be no felt hatred of God in the heart—no tumultuous risings of nature or antipathy against Him. Now, we do so manage, and nothing more easy, than to pass whole days, nay weeks, months, years, and let me tell it all out, a whole lifetime, without thinking seriously and in good earnest of God, or taking a full, deliberate, and practical view, whether of His character or His ways. There is no difficulty whatever in forgetting God. The difficulty lies all the other

way—to keep Him in remembrance. The whole habit of nature respecting Him is that of a deep and unconscious slumber; and to awaken it out of that slumber—there lies the difficulty. There is no difficulty in sleeping on, and amid the opiates of sense and of time, in charming every thought of God away from the mind, and so lull the heart into a state of perfect and so of peaceful insensibility regarding Him. We have already made it out against the children of nature, that they are quite willing to be on these terms with God through all eternity—that is, on the footing of Live and let live; on this footing, quite willing are they that God and they shall be conclusively quit of each other—they taking no care or cognizance of Him, and He taking as little care or cognizance of them, provided only He would leave them in the full swing and possession of this world's enjoyments, give them a fee-simple, as it were, of His own glorious creation, and so let them everlastingly alone. No wonder though we are willing to be at peace with such a God; and if the God who made this earth and these heavens would consent to such a state of things between Him and us—no wonder though in our hearts there should be no hatred, no hostility against Him.

19. But such is not the actual state, or system, or economy of things under which we are placed. God will not give His consent to it. Our own experience can tell that live and let live is not the tenure on which we are suffered to abide in the territory of our present habitation. In a few little years at the farthest, death will knock at the door of every one of us; and then shall we be made to behold, in truer and larger perspective than now, what the permanent footing is on which God chooses to stand with the creatures whom He has formed. Such a spectacle as the world we live in, where men regale themselves amid the beauties of a smiling creation and the bounties of an unfailing Providence, and where the very gifts seduce our affections from the Giver, cannot long be tolerated, but will soon be swept off as a monstrous anomaly, or a moral nuisance, from the face of a goodly universe deformed by its presence. Such a middle place as the one we at present occupy, where men live in tolerable ease and enjoyment, yet live without God, must soon give way, and nature be broken up into two large departments standing wholly aloof from each other, with an impassable line of demarcation, or rather an impassable gulf, as of a wilderness untrodden and unknown between the good and the evil—on the one hand, a joyful and everlasting heaven, where all is love and perfect

loyalty to Him who sitteth on the throne; on the other, a dreary and everlasting hell, where the outcasts of condemnation lift the cry of rebellion against Him, and who, after a life of thoughtlessness and thanklessness here, will spend their eternity there in hardy and rooted and resolved ungodliness. What seems but indifference here, will break out there into an open and implacable hatred of God; and the question is, whether this very hatred, which is disclaimed by the worldly and unconverted now, be not indeed ripening in their hearts, and preparing them for all the despite and the defiance which rankle through eternity in the prison-house of the damned? There are methods by which this might be tested, or by which it might be made manifest, whether this hatred of God be in us or no. It will become abundantly manifest after that God has laid on the awful infliction of His final and everlasting doom. But the question we have now to put is, How do we feel here, when He only threatens the infliction—the time not yet being come for the execution of it? It is true of these threats that they are not always sounding in our ears—very seldom, indeed, save when read out to us from the Bible, or now and then denounced against us by a faithful minister from the pulpit. Neither are they often, if ever at all, present to our thoughts; and no wonder that we should feel no enmity to God in our hearts all the time that we are not thinking of Him. The very same thing holds true of the worst enemy we have in the world; we must think of him ere we can feel against him. So long as he is absent from our minds, our minds will be at peace regarding him—for it is only when he shows himself, whether to the sight or to the imagination, that the fierce and fiery resentment of our bosoms will be awakened. Now this I fear to be the whole amount of our peace with God—such a peace as most assuredly is no peace. So long as we live without God, or without the thought of God, no wonder that we are not sensible all the while of aught in our hearts against God. But the venomous thing may be in us all the while, though dormant and unfelt so long as we are engaged with business, or amusement, or hearty companionship, or any other earthly thing, be it lawful or be it unlawful, if it but divert our thoughts from God. But the right criterion, the true way of bringing this matter to the proof, were to ascertain what the feeling is should God stand fully before us. We do not expect that He will show Himself to us as He did to the patriarch Job, who had only before heard of Him with the hearing of the ear,

but, after he beheld Him with his eyes, was overwhelmed in the presence of His sacred and august majesty with the sense of his own exceeding vileness, and repented himself in dust and in ashes. Now, we cannot bid ourselves thus take an earnest look of God; but we can bid ourselves take an earnest thought of Him. Only let Him be the true God whom we thus set before the eye of our minds, and not a god of our own deceitful imagination—for to be at peace with such a God, or even to have some sort of sentimental regard for Him, were just as natural as for the literal worshipper of images to have a fondness or a fancy for the idol of his own making. It is to the real God that we ought to look—not the god of our own imagination, that feigned or factitious deity who is just as much an idol as if made of brass or of stone—being nothing more than an ideal representation of our Maker. To make the experiment a fair one, it is the true and living God whom we must entertain the thought of—God as set forth in the Bible which we should earnestly read, or as set forth by the faithful expounder of the Bible whom we should earnestly listen to. It is not the god of mere poetry, whether ancient or modern, who can decide this question; neither is it the god of those who reject the Bible, or, what is just as bad, who pervert the Bible, and have thus, at the bidding of a meagre superficial theology, turned them to a god of their own making. They may bear no hatred in their hearts towards such a god; but what we ask and wish them to ascertain is, How they feel towards the God of the Old and New Testaments, even as exhibited and set forth in His own actual revelation—for example, when He claims the rightful property and supreme affection of those whom He has made, and complains that of this property he has been altogether robbed by the neglect and indifference of creatures who do not care for Him—who tells us that the love of the world is opposite to the love of Him who made the world; and that when we set our hearts on any created thing more than on Himself, we are making a god of our pleasure, or a god of our wealth, or a god of our ease, or, in short, a divinity of our own taste and our own will, and that in the preference we give to these, we have as good as fallen down to the worship of other gods, and in forsaking Him who is the fountain of living waters, have incurred the guilt and are liable to all the vengeance which is due to idolatry. How is it that we feel when we set our faces in steady contemplation towards such a God?—who challenges for Himself an entire mastery

over both the outer and the inner man, saying to each of us, My son, give me thy heart—for He will be satisfied with nothing less; and, moved to jealousy when less is given, lets us know that He is a God who will not be mocked with a lame or imperfect offering. And so, in the language of the book of Psalms, the nations who forget Him shall be turned into hell. When God is forced on the contemplation of the mind in such an attitude and such a character as this, which, after all, is the true attitude in which He stands forth, and the true, the actual character which belongs to Him—when thus seen as He really is, how is the mind affected towards Him? No wonder if we are unconscious of all felt hostility so long as we do not think of Him, for this holds true of the deadliest enemy that we have in this world—quite at peace with him all the time that he is out of sight and out of thought, and yet the object of our most fixed antipathy notwithstanding, as becomes manifest every time he reappears, whether to sense or to memory, when, whether in the form of dread or of despite and hatred, the revolt of the heart against him is instantly awakened. Now, it is by this very criterion that we should decide the question of our feeling or inclination towards God—not by the state of our mind when we are not regarding Him, but by the state of our mind when He is any way obtruded on our regard, whether through the Bible itself, or through the sermon of that minister who is a faithful expounder of its lessons. When set forth thus, not in the colours of our own fancy, but as the true and scriptural God, claiming the supreme love of His creatures; asking what every earthly parent feels to be his right, the place which belongs to him in the affections of his own children; complaining as if robbed of His dues, because the gifts that He has showered upon us with His own hands have seduced our carnal hearts from Himself the giver; demanding such a revolution, or call it such a revulsion of our tastes, that, better than all the fair or fancied objects of this smiling world, must we love Him who made the world, so as that our love, our present warm and natural love for the things of sense and of time, must give way, or at least be subordinated to our love of Him who made all and owns all—a change so mighty that they who undergo it are said to have become new creatures, or to have been born again. When God is thus made to stand before us in His uncompromising sacredness, intolerant of our preference for the things which His own hands have made, over Him the maker—when these high

and surely most righteous pretensions are urged upon us, whether by the Bible or the preacher who will not let us alone—then begins the death-struggle of the natural man against the true religion; or, which is the same thing, against the true God who asks, and on the pain of eternal damnation, this religion at our hands. And let us now see, when thus charged and thus threatened for living without God, whether the reaction and the revolt of our spirits do not prove a great deal more—even that with all our heart, soul, and mind, we are against God. This required surrender of all that is dearest to life is felt as painful as would be the surrender of life itself; and thus with all the intensity of a contest that is mortal, does nature withstand the Christianity that requires it. Such an evangelism as this is utterly nauseated by the men of the world, and not only branded as Methodism, so as to be exiled and put forth of particular societies, but for the purpose of its expulsion from whole communities or states, has had the fires of persecution lighted up against it. If we let men alone, they will pass quietly and inoffensively through life as the mere forgetters of God. It is when called forth or provoked because not let alone, that they are made to stand forth in their true characters as the enemies or the haters of God.

20. We have thus endeavoured to establish both charges, and to make palpable now what will be fully manifested on that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open—even that the heart of every natural man is both without God and against God. The moral enormity of such a state is more properly the theme of a future argument. We shall therefore conclude for the present with one remark. If it be indeed true of all men that they are both the forgetters and the haters of God, let us hear no longer of one man being better than another because of his natural virtues; or that because a good citizen of the world, he is therefore fitted for the citizenship of heaven. This is saying no more than that the summit of a mountain on earth is nearer than its base to the sun in the firmament—while to all sense equal, because of the insignificance of all terrestrial distances when brought to the high standard of astronomy: And thus it is, that on the high moral standard of the upper sanctuary, all men will be found to have fallen immeasurably beneath the perfection of the Divine law; and that having lived their whole lives long at a distance from the Father of their spirits, and been all the while breakers of the first and greatest com-

mandment—they are all of them the children of deepest guilt, because one and all the children of ungodliness.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY.

1. We confine ourselves to the scriptural account of the introduction of sin into the world—for we possess no other which can be at all relied on. There are vestiges in pagan antiquity, in certain of its mythological visions, and even the writings of its philosophers and poets, wherein we may descry so great a resemblance to the Bible history of the Fall, that they have been appealed to by the learned as confirmatory of the Mosaic narrative. The likeness, however, in our estimation, is so very distant, that it would require almost an effort of the fancy to recognise it. These heathen traditions, if they have really proceeded from the original truth as their source and their centre —like the emanation at length of a far-distant luminary—have died away into such faintness and feebleness as to be now scarcely discernible. They have at last gathered upon them such an air of the fabulous and the legendary, that we feel it no advantage in the way of evidence, or for at all strengthening the Christian argument, to dwell upon them. It is certainly well that the historical of our Scriptures, from first to last, should be in such general good keeping with the history and literature of the world at large. But we confess no great value for these moonlight and shadowy reflections, when compared with the distinct and specific statements to which we are conducted in the light of the Jewish and Christian revelations—substantiated as they each are by a direct and proper evidence of their own. We shall therefore pass over in this argument, not only the alleged allegoric representations of Greek and Roman authors, but also the reveries of Hindooism, and even the records of a serpent-worship in various nations of the world, which has been plausibly and ingeniously traced upward to the garden of Eden—and will keep by the records of the Old and New Testaments. The proper time, indeed, for the things which we now turn away from, is in a discussion on the evidences of our

faith; and not, as at present, when we are employed in the examination of its subject-matter.

2. The first account, then, we have of sin's entrance into our world, is in the third chapter of the Book of Genesis. True, it is not there said that Adam's first sin entailed a sinfulness, not only on himself, but on all his posterity. But it is worthy of notice, that in this record of man's earliest transgression, there are certain consequences of the Fall spoken of, which were not confined to the immediate agents in that dread and fatal transaction, but which were laid in common upon them and upon all their descendants. Even the curse pronounced upon the serpent, though it had a higher fulfilment in the discomfiture and overthrow of that arch-fiend who entered the animal, and made him the organ of his own infernal machinations; yet has this curse had a fulfilment, too, not only on the animal himself, but on all the future individuals of the species—in being degraded beneath all cattle and every beast of the field—cast down, it would appear, from their original and higher rank into the tribe of reptiles, condemned henceforward to go upon their belly, and to eat dust all the days of their life. To this sentence reference is made in other parts of the Bible, as by Isaiah, when, in describing the state and circumstances of a far-distant futurity, he tells that dust shall be the serpent's meat; and by Micah, when, in speaking of judgments to be inflicted on the nations, he says they shall lick the dust like a serpent. But it interests us more nearly to observe, that, in awarding retribution to each of the parties which shared in the crime of that eventful day, there is the same aggregate method of dealing, not with our first parents alone, but with the whole human family that proceeded from them. It was not to Eve only, but to all the future mothers of our race, that God said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thy husband shall rule over thee." The apostle tells us, that the woman had fallen in a way that man had not, had fallen into the transgression; but this transgression, which was properly and immediately hers, brought a punishment along with it on women of all generations. Again, it was not individual Adam alone who suffered because of the curse laid upon the ground—cursed, it is said, for thy sake—yet a curse felt not by him only, but by his posterity in all ages, who, in the great and general mass, are doomed to a life of hard labour, eating in sorrow all the days of their life, and at length consigned to the

dust out of which their progenitor was taken. This was said to him individually; but in the unsparing and unexcepted death which comes upon every man, we find it fulfilled on all universally. It is not said here that because Adam sinned, all will sin also; but we most assuredly gather that because Adam sinned all will suffer. It is because the first man sinned that all men die.

3. This information, that all the men who are born suffer because of Adam's transgression, may prepare and perhaps reconcile us to the distant information—that all the men who are born sin because of Adam's transgression. But it is from other passages of the Bible that this last information is gotten—that is, not only that the mortality of all, but that the sinfulness of all is the universal consequent of Adam having sinned; as if by his first disobedience there was the striking out of a fountain, whence the moral virus has flowed out in a descending stream upon all the men of all future generations—so as to verify the description which the Psalmist gives of himself, that he was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity. But before tracing this downward influence along the line of our world's history, let me first remark the effect of his first sin on Adam himself. It was committed in the violation of a first covenant, which he could not fail to know that he had broken; and in virtue of which he must have recognised himself in the altogether new character of a transgressor against the will and commandment of his Lawgiver. He would henceforward image forth God as looking to him with an altered countenance; and the instant effect would be an altered feeling in his own bosom towards God. This revolution in his state would create a great moral revolution in his heart—a transition *per saltum* from confidence and love, to the diametrically opposite affections of dread and distrust and alienation. It is thus that by his one act of disobedience, he became unfitted for the only obedience that is of any worth in Heaven's estimation—that free and hopeful and rejoicing obedience, which, with the burden of an unsettled controversy upon his spirits, was utterly impossible. As surely as he recoiled in person from the presence of the Lord God when walking in the garden—so surely would his mind recoil from the thought of Him. The history of this fatal change, as given in the Book of Genesis, accords with the philosophy thereof as grounded on the laws and constitution of human nature. We read that when Adam heard the voice of God, he was afraid

and hid himself. As it is said of perfect love that it casteth out fear—so fear, this fear of terror, would cast out love. Obedience would thus be uprooted in its principle; and the mind, thus desolated of what was before its great and reigning affection, would try to replace the painful void by seeking to other objects of other affections; and in the pursuit or enjoyment of them would be glad to forget all thought of Him to whom the conscious delinquent could not look but with uneasiness and dismay. It is then that the great master sin of ungodliness takes possession of the heart; and between the prerogatives, on the one hand, of God's violated law, and the practical atheism, on the other, of a creature who, having lost all hope and so living without Him in the world, has turned to his own will and his own way—there ensues a deadly breach, an ever-widening gulf of separation between guilty man and the Author of his being, whose hands made and fashioned him, and whose right hand upholds him continually.

4. This is the change which would take place upon Adam himself in paradise, and before he was expelled from it. To see how the matter sped out of paradise, we have only to pursue the history downward, or ascertain all that might be gathered on the subject of our present argument from the statements of inspired men. We have already presented a few decisive testimonies from the Bible to the actual or existing depravity, and that universal, too, of the human species; but what we have now to do with is not the existence, it is the origin of this depravity, whereof we have no obscure intimation in the account which Scripture gives of an early birth that took place in the world—even that of Seth, from whom, through Noah, whose family alone were preserved in the otherwise universal destruction of the flood, all the men of the earth were descended. We read of Adam, that he was created in the image of God—that image, as the apostle tells, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him" (Gen. v. 1). "The image and glory of God" (1 Cor. xi. 7). And so we read of Adam that he was created after the image of God, but of Seth, that he was born after the image of Adam—not of Adam in his original, but of Adam in his transformed likeness. After that Adam was a hundred and thirty years old, he "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image, and called his name Seth" (Gen. v. 3), who was born after the death of Abel, being appointed, we read,

another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew, (Gen. iv. 25,) not only born then, but conceived long after the transgression in the garden of Eden, and consequent expulsion of our first parents from that place of security and blessedness. Here then we have the first descent between Adam and our existing species, marked by a transition of the same likeness from father to son —which transition we have only to suppose took place at every future descent, that a connexion in the way of cause and consequent may be established between Adam's first sin and the universal sinfulness of our race, comprising not only men of all generations, but all the men of every generation. Certain it is that the effect, the universal effect, is strongly deponed to, even in the brief record that we have of this world's history between the Fall and the Flood, before which latter catastrophe "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," insomuch that "it repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth" (Gen. vi. 5-7). "The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Gen. vi. 11, 12). And lest it should be deemed an exception to the universality of this corruption that Noah was spared, we are expressly told that he found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He is one, in the enumeration by the apostle, of those who were saved by faith; and by faith that it might be of grace, lest he or any man should boast. But we do not need to infer argumentatively what we know historically; and from a recorded depravity of Noah, even after so great a deliverance as that by which he and his family were signalized (Gen. ix. 21), we learn that even he fell short of the absolute perfection—that even he, when brought to the high standard of an unbending law, formed no exception to the apostolic averment of none being righteous, no, not one. We cannot imagine a more complete demonstration than what is furnished by this history of a universally tainted and corrupt species—all swept off on the express ground that all had corrupted their ways; and this followed up by a flagrant deed of corruption on the part of the only man who, along with his family, was saved.

5. But we have properly to do at present not with this de-

pravity as a fact, but as a consequent; and so as that we might be guided backward to the origin from which it sprung. In this view we cannot but regard as of momentous import all those expressions which serve to connect the actual wickedness of man with a tendency to wickedness from his youth up, and by which, if carried far enough back, we might be led to conclude that the tendency was inborn, and characteristic not of this one or that other individually, but generally of the species, and belonging therefore to each because of hereditary descent, and so realized by all. Should this be made good, then every man is a sinner, not alone through example, or education, or aught that was merely partial and accidental and contingent, but, apart from and independently of these, he is a sinner solely in virtue of his being a man, or because he partakes of a quality common to himself and all his progenitors, as well as common to himself and all his human contemporaries, who, though now asunder and on separate lines of descent, yet are they lines which diverge from the same point, and issue forth of the same parentage. Now although this native tendency—this disposition, coeval with the first day of childhood, be not expressly affirmed in the scriptural narrative of the antediluvian times, there is in the following sentence a close approach to it, as descriptive of a universal bias, and uttered by God on the occasion of Noah's offerings immediately after the flood:—"And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for the imagination of man's heart is evil *from his youth.*" The time of this affirmation bestows a special interest upon it—pronounced after that the population of the old world had been all swept away, and before that the earth was again replenished with a new population. It is descriptive, in fact, not of the men of any particular age, whether ancient or modern, but is descriptive of the genus man, and given forth, too, at a time when there were none to exemplify it but Noah and his family, the "eight souls who were saved by water." Yet narrow as this channel was, it proved enough for the transmission of the corrupt virus in all its ancient strength from the generations that went before to the generations that came after—a sufficient bridgeway of communication by which the deadly infection was carried across the flood, and all its waters were unable to wash it away. Accordingly we find of this generic property, that, adhesive to one and all of the human race, it soon

reasserted its prevalence and power in the world; and the earth had only to be filled anew with men, to be the scene of as great vice and violence as before. It is true that, out from this mighty aggregate of wickedness, God selected a family—just as Noah was before the flood; but as his salvation was of faith, so pre-eminently was that of Abraham, the father of the faithful; and both were selected, not of merit, but because each found grace in the eyes of the Lord. Even they were neither of them solitary exceptions from the universal sinfulness; and if from the latter of these two patriarchs, we look to his descendants, the children of Israel—the nation whom God had signalized, the chosen and peculiar people whom He had taken for His own—so far from exceptions to this general law of human depravity, we shall find the most flagrant examples of it among their stiff-necked and rebellious generations. The whole world, in truth, was a wide-extended moral desert, in which not one oasis of perfect virtue or perfect innocence could be found—so that the inspired apostle, who, with the eye of his mind went up and down in it, tells, as the result of his survey, that the whole world was guilty before God, and that all, both Jews and Gentiles, were under sin.

6. But the transmission of this sore mental disease, as if by a law of physical necessity, is not a mere inference from history, but a thing of direct affirmation. The generic proposition indeed respecting man which issued from the mouth of God himself, may be so regarded, when He said "that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"—speaking of this depravity as a thing of continuance, or of progress from age to age, or of derivation from one age to another, and so carrying us upward, as it were, to a fountainhead at the first, when it made its first appearance in our world. But there are other and more explicit assertions of this truth—as in Job—"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" or in the Psalms, where even the man according to God's own heart says of himself—"I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." But most distinctly and conclusively of all by the apostle, who tells in language than which nothing can be more express, that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" that by the offence of one many were dead, insomuch that death reigned universally, and all men came into condemnation;—that "by the disobedience of one many were made

sinners;"—that "by man came death;" and, let there be no mistake, that "in Adam all die." And again, "the first man is of the earth earthy;"—"as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy;"—"we have borne the image of the earthy," an image so stamped on every child of nature that, in his natural state, or state of flesh and blood, which is also called his corrupt state, he cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The corruptible and the mortal are in fact commensurate the one with the other—so that ere heaven can be entered by us, the corruptible must put on incorruption, even as the mortal must put on immortality. The one is co-extensive with the other, so that, because of Adam's sin all do sin, just as because of Adam's sin all must die.

7. And in all sound Christian philosophy it is enough that Scripture tells us so; nor in the face of such authority is it for us to doubt of it as a thing incredible. But what is more, there is not even room to wonder at it as a thing unexampled in nature or experience. The truth is, that there are a thousand analogies to keep it in countenance. It is perfectly at one with all that we observe of like begetting like, whether in the animal or vegetable kingdoms. That the offspring of Adam, had he remained innocent and unfallen, would have been virtuous and untainted as himself, has no more of marvel or mystery in it, than the gentleness of the dove, or faithfulness of the dog, or sagacity of the elephant, or delicious perfume of the rose, transmitted from generation to generation, the universal and abiding characteristics of the species to which they respectively belong. Or, on the other hand, that all men should inherit the selfish and earthly bias of their progenitor after he had taken on another hue—transformed and deteriorated by the transgression into which he fell—is no more a theme for astonishment than the ferocity of the tiger, or the poisonous quality of the foxglove, which have continued the same throughout all ages. The laws of physiological succession extend alike to the mental and the bodily; and we but walk in the footsteps of enlightened science when, dismissing our own preconceptions, we take our lesson in both either from our own observation or from credible testimony, and whether that be the testimony of our fellow-men or of an authentic revelation from God.

8. We do not mean to affirm that, because the moral depravity of man exists within him in the form of a constitutional quality, it is therefore of the same unchanging character or aspect with any of those natural properties by which an inferior animal or a

vegetable is signalized. This depravity not only had a definite origin, but all history tells of its progress, and that the exhibitions of it vary from age to age. The very largeness and diversity of the human powers, and an influence unknown in any other species of living creatures upon the earth, by which the habits of one generation are made to operate either balefully or beneficially on the habits of another—these insure a growth and an expansion and a development to any principle or tendency, whether good or evil, which may have taken rooted possession of our species. Even the mechanism of the human faculties might help to explain this, and so as in a great measure to account for the darker and deeper degeneracy into which men fell, step by step, and of which we have a frightful description by Paul in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. The sense and terrors of guilt would naturally incline men to make their escape from the very thought of God. They did not like to retain Him in their knowledge, and so God, it is said, gave them over to vile affections and to a reprobate mind. The understanding and the will acted and re-acted on each other. On the one hand, their blinded understandings vitiated the will; and on the other, a depraved will perverted the understanding—two effects which are implicated together in the single expression, that their foolish heart was darkened. And so, with headlong descent, they lapsed into a degrading idolatry and most degrading vices—their theology and their morals being alike impure—till the earth was filled with all unrighteousness and malice and contentions and abominable licentiousness.

9. We may here advert to the distinction made by theologians between original and actual sin. Even apart from the scriptural account of the origin of sin, or rather of its entry into our world, it is a distinction into which we might have fallen, though with nothing to direct us but the light of our own observation. We could not, in fact, with aught like a habit of generalization and philosophy, but have found our way to it. On the induction of man's actual sins the doctrine of original sin would have been founded. When we say that all men have sinned, it is on the basis of their actual sins that we are enabled to speak in terms of such generality. When we say that in all men there is a prior tendency to sin, we are but resolving this general fact into its principle or cause. We are but giving a compendious or summary expression of it. When we speak of an original ferocity in the tiger, we mean that, in virtue of a native and

hereditary disposition, and at the same time universal, each individual of the species will, when the time and opportunity come round, break forth into deeds of ferocity. These deeds make up the actual cruelties of this tribe of animals—a prior tendency to these existing in embryo at the birth, but sure to develop itself in the future history of each; and it is this prior tendency which we should denominate the original cruelty of their nature. We proceed on the same distinction when we speak at one time of the sins and at another of the sinfulness of men. Each crab-tree beings forth sour apples. There is an organic necessity for this in the very make and constitution of the plant—bound up with the first germ, whether it be sapling, or seed, or acorn, in which each takes its rise, and in virtue of which, should it arrive at a maturity and a produce, it will evince in the sourness of its fruit the law of that species to which it belongs. Thus, too, there is an original and an actual in the sins of men—a prior tendency to sin, bound up, as it were, in the very frame and composition of humanity—an element within the receptacles of every infant's bosom, and which, should he live long enough for its expansion and its forthgoings, will infallibly yield in every instance the bitter fruit of transgression.

10. It is thus that we could have reasoned from actual to original sin, even apart from revelation—just as we reason from an effect to its cause, or from any number of facts having the same common quality, to the common principle which originated and so comprehends them all. We did not need the informations of Scripture to teach us that a universal sinning on the part of our species argued a universal sinfulness; and which sinfulness too, we could, without the help of Scripture, have denominated a prior tendency. But we could not, without its help, have learned how or in what circumstances it was that this tendency first came into our world—that was inserted in the constitution of Adam and Eve on their first act of disobedience to God, and by them transmitted with unfailing succession to all their posterity. This is an information which we owe altogether to the Bible; and it possesses a theological importance which, at the present stage of our course, we are not prepared fully to explain;—suffice it to say, that as it tells how by the sin of one man all men who stand to him in a certain relation (that of descendants) have both sinned and suffered; so it may prepare us for the counterpart statement, that by the righteousness of one, all men who stand to him in some certain relation, might perhaps in con-

sequence attain both to a righteousness and its reward. I purposely state the matter thus generally now; and will only advert to the parallelism instituted in the sacred Scriptures between Adam and Christ, which, for aught we know, might confer a doctrinal magnitude on the history of the Fall, greatly exceeding what superficially, or at first sight, we might be disposed to apprehend.

11. But it were shutting our eyes to a most important passage of this Bible narrative did we stop short at Adam, and keep out of view the part which a higher agent had in the moral ruin of our world. For our knowledge of his existence we are indebted exclusively to revelation; and I need not insist on the violation which it would imply of all sound philosophy, to deny in the face of evidence what is utterly beyond the range of our direct and personal observation, and which we have no possible means of disproving. Let the information have been ridiculed as it may, it were as presumptuously speculative in us to deny that there is a great infernal spirit, as to deny that there are inhabitants in the planet of Jupiter. Both regions are ulterior to any distinct or decisive perception of ours; and if, on the one question, it were arrogance to set ourselves in opposition to the probabilities of nature—on the other, it were a surpassing arrogance to set ourselves in opposition to the certainties of a well-authenticated revelation. I will attempt no collection of the testimonies which might be gathered from all parts of the Bible to the existence of Satan, who is there made known to us as the adversary of all righteousness; and who, in the prosecution of his hostile and malignant policy, did interpose at the creation of our world, and succeeded in seducing our first parents from their allegiance to God. What we are now concerned with is the reality of this single act—his temptation of Eve in paradise; and for the first scriptural proof, we appeal to the narrative itself in the Book of Genesis. Surely a supernatural and far superior agency to that of a serpent was then at work. But, as if to defeat the notion of an allegory, there are distinct references made to it in other parts of sacred writ as an historical event; and which serve to point out this fallen spirit as having had intimately to do with the moral state and destinies of our race—insomuch, that while it was the success of his first enterprise which achieved our ruin, it is his final overthrow which completes and consummates our recovery. But at present we only select those passages which go to authenticate the Mosaic account

of the transgression in the garden of Eden :—"He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years" (Rev. xx. 2). We cannot read of him being thus named, without recurring to the narrative of his temptation. And so in the quotation—"And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world" (Rev. xii. 9). But more explicit still is the following—"I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. xi. 3). And finally, we read in 1 Tim. ii. 14, of the woman having been deceived, which implies a deceiver—the same, doubtless, who is represented as deceiving the nations, and deceiving the whole world—he who tempted Adam in the garden, and succeeded—he who tempted Christ in the wilderness, and failed—of whom we are told that he goeth about as a raging lion, seeking whom he may devour; whose devices are manifold (2 Cor. ii. 11), and the great instrument of whose ascendency over men is the deceitfulness of sin.

12. It is the more indispensable to look in all its prominency at the part which Satan bore in the corruption of our species by sin, else we can have no adequate view, in one of its great aspects, of that enterprise on which Christ set forth, when He undertook the world's salvation. The object on which He came was the overthrow of Satan. The contest, it would appear, between the powers of good and evil in our world, is somehow implicated with the higher politics of the universe. There are mighty potentates, though to us invisible, engaged in a warfare, which has for its object the moral ascendency of the one or the other, over the family of mankind. For this we shall not quote the numerous intimations of the Old Testament, beginning with an ordination of God at the very time of the Fall, by which He put enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent—the one to bruise the heel of his adversary, or to have partial advantages over Him; the other to bruise the head, and so to be crowned at length with an ultimate and decisive victory. Such a character given to the outset of this wondrous history, should not be lost sight of as we trace the progress of it. Most assuredly, it is not lost sight of in the Bible. There we have no dubious or uncertain glimpses of it, but clear and decisive manifestations. For passing over the numerous references of the Old Testament, and more especially in the prophets, where the

achievement of our redemption is described as the result of a strenuous contest, effected by the might of a great Conqueror, who travelled in the greatness of His strength, and the salvation of whose redeemed was brought to Him by the prowess of His own arm in a day of vengeance upon His enemies—passing over all that we find in the earlier Scriptures, what can be more explicit than the testimonies beyond reckoning, upon this subject, from the writings of the apostles? That was an obvious trial of strength which took place between Christ and Satan in the wilderness—and His miraculous dispossessions were effected, not as the Jews did blasphemously affirm, by, but against the prince of the devils; and the "Get thee behind me, Satan," was a proof that while appearing to remonstrate only with men, He was, in fact, resisting the great deceiver of men; and the exclamation of triumphant joy, "I beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven," is the indication of a supernal conflict beyond the ken or the sight of mortal eye; and the direct instigation by Satan of Judas the betrayer of our Saviour, proves that the conflict was reciprocal, and that while on earth He had to do with a plotting and a counterworking adversary. But the artifices of his wicked and mischievous policy have not terminated with the ascension of Him who is the Captain of our salvation; for we read of Satan having filled the heart of Ananias to lie to the Holy Ghost: and he still holds sovereignty wherever the gospel has not dispossessed him of it—for the express object of this gospel, in turning men from darkness to light, is to turn them from the power of Satan unto God. He is not yet conclusively placed under the feet of our great spiritual Conqueror, for though the promise have been given, its fulfilment is still in reserve—that the God of peace should bruise Satan under our feet shortly. And the contest is not yet ended. There are precepts of standing obligation in the Bible, which imply a continued warfare on the part of Satan against the Church of God, and by which Christians are directed how to acquit themselves under it. In one place what they are to do that Satan tempt them not (1 Cor. vii. 5); in another, what was done for them by an apostle, lest Satan should get an advantage of them, their spiritual guide and guardian not being ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. ii. 11); in another, that one of these devices of Satan is to transform himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. xi. 14); in another, Christ's disciples are told "not to give place to the devil" (Eph. iv. 27); in another, Paul complains that Satan hindered his coming to

visit the Thessalonians (1 Thess. ii. 18); in another, he affirms of certain of his followers that they had "turned aside after Satan" (1 Tim. v. 15); in another, are believers enjoined, in terms significant of warfare, to resist the devil and he would flee from them (James iv. 7). All these passages speak expressively of a struggle between him who is the prince and the power of darkness, and them whom the Scripture denominate the children of light, who are accordingly charged to put on the whole armour of God, that they may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil—for that they wrestled not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (Eph. vi. 11, 12). But Scripture is never so distinct and declared upon this subject, as when it tells of Him who is the head of His Church, and Captain of her salvation—that the purpose for which He, the Son of God, was manifested, was to destroy the works of the devil (1 John iii. 8); and again, how He took part of flesh and blood, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil. And lastly, the prophetic descriptions given in the Apocalypse of the ultimate fulfilment of this purpose, identify the final triumph of the Son of God with the final overthrow of His great adversary. For while, on the one hand, Satan is represented as making inroads upon the Church, and obtaining temporary advantages over it (Rev. ii. 10; xii. 12); on the other, we read of his successive discomfitures (Rev. xii. 7-17; xx. 2, 3); and at last the complete and conclusive victory of the Messiah over him, when the devil is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where he shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

13. In spite of all the ridicule to which this doctrine of a great spiritual adversary has been exposed, and all the degradation that has been cast upon it by the style of low and vulgar familiarity in which he has been represented, it is nevertheless a doctrine, I apprehend, of great moral and theological importance. First, it were a violent transgression of all sound Christian philosophy, to reject the doctrine in the face of the Bible's most express testimonies; or for man, in his own little corner of the universe, and without one scintilla of natural evidence either for or against, to pronounce either on what is, or what is not, throughout the mighty unknown which surrounds, and which lies exterior to all that is found to exist within the narrow limits of his observation. It is not, however, of the infidelity which

repudiates the statements of Scripture on this subject that I now speak, but of the levity which slights and disregards it. Like every other revelation within the compass of God's own book, it will be found of this, too, that all Scripture is profitable—and that not for doctrine alone, but practically too, or for instruction in righteousness.

14. For, first, it holds true of every other task which is put into our hands, that it is matter of the most direct, nay of business importance, if I might so speak, that we should know the difficulties and obstacles which lie in the way of its fulfilment. Our great business on earth is to regain the lost image of the Godhead, or, in other words, to perfect our holiness. For the prosecution of this arduous work, it is essential to know how arduous it is, or what the strength and what the vigilance which are requisite for its success. It is obviously with this view that the apostle tells his disciples how they struggle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers—and this to put them on their utmost strenuousness, and on the busy exercise of all their Christian virtues, in the maintenance of a great moral and spiritual combat. The knowledge of a great spiritual adversary, fiercely intent on the destruction of our species, and possessed of the utmost force and skill for the accomplishment of this, the master, the malignant passion by which he is actuated —this knowledge seems indispensable, in order that we may rightly address ourselves to the great work of our sanctification. When told, as without question we most plainly and authoritatively are in Scripture, that there is a contest, a zealous and emulative contest, among the higher and unseen powers of the universe, and this for a moral ascendency over the human race, whether on the side of good or evil, it surely is an information which practically concerns us; and, in fact, the Bible itself treats it not as a matter of speculation, but as a matter of prudential and preceptive discipleship, when it assigns the part and the performance which belong to us in this mysterious warfare. It is precisely because we have higher powers than those of humanity against us, that we must also have higher powers than those of mere unaided humanity upon our side. And, accordingly, we are told by the apostle to put on the whole armour of God; and for what purpose?—that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. We are further told what the Christian graces and virtues are which compose this spiritual armour. But then the crowning direction is, that we

should pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit; and, let me further add, for the Spirit, for whom we are bidden to watch, as well as pray, with all perseverance. Who can refuse the practical importance of a doctrine that stands linked with so important a practical observation, as that of humble, vigilant, unceasing prayer, or that of a constant prayerful attitude on our part, as the proper attitude of defence against the might and the machinations of an adversary who is far too many for us? Nevertheless, not me, says the apostle, but the grace of God which is in me. It is this which resolves the mystery of our triumph over principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world; greater is the Spirit of God, than he who has been styled the god of this world—the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. And this ascendant, this all-conquering Spirit, to whom belongs the mastery, and who alone is able to subdue the other spirit under Him, He is given to our believing prayers; and so we read that this is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith. And surely the doctrine of a subtle, and desperate, and enraged adversary, bent on our destruction, ought not to be lightly regarded, when it leads us directly to that habit of watchfulness and prayer and dependence on a higher power than our own, on which the success of all practical Christianity so essentially hinges.

15. It is all-important to remark, that, whereas the word is the instrument whereby the good Spirit of God works in the hearts of the regenerate, and obtains the ascendency there, so also the world is the instrument whereby the evil spirit, the great enemy and deceiver of the human race, works in the hearts of the ungodly, and maintaineth the ascendency there. We are not sensible of any immediate dealings with the good Spirit, but only with the word; and, in like manner, we are not sensible of any immediate dealings with the evil spirit, but only with the world. But though, on the one hand, it be with the word only that we have proximately to do, can aught be of greater importance for the alimenting and the upholding of our Christianity, than to be told that it is the heavenly Spirit who gives all its efficacy to the word, and for whom, therefore, we should continually pray? And, on the other hand, though it be with the world, and the world only, that we have sensibly and proximately to do, is it not of like importance to

be told, that it is an evil and powerful spirit from beneath, who makes the world and all that is in it the instrument of his ruinous fascinations, and against whom therefore we should watch and pray? It is with the word, on the one hand, and with the world, on the other, that we have materially and sensibly to do. By what means shall a young man cleanse his way in the world?—By giving heed thereto according to the word. How even did the mighty Saviour prevail in His contest with the prince of darkness, when he offered Him the world and all its glory?—He conquered him with Scripture, and repelled the tempter by quotations taken from the sacred volume, or by weapons taken from the armoury of the word. The word and the world may be all which is palpable to us, or all which comes forth visibly as parties in the contest; nevertheless, it is of first-rate necessity to be made aware of the unseen agents, and by whom these elements are respectively wielded. The word of God is said to be the sword of the Spirit, whom we are called upon to invoke—else in our hands the weapon is altogether powerless. And again, Satan is said to be the god of this world, whom we are called upon to resist; yet how?—"whom resist steadfast in the faith;" which faith bears a respect to both of these supernatural influences, when it seeks for the help of the one against the other. With both these revelations, in fact, the work and the warfare of Christianity have essentially to do. They stand in a certain common relationship to the moral interests of our race, which will suffer and be in jeopardy should either of them be neglected.

16. A great deal more could be said on this subject. Let me only state what I cannot enlarge upon—that the doctrine of a great Satanic adversary, whose works the Saviour came to destroy, is fitted to encourage and to enhance our faith in the Saviour. He, we may be well assured, would not put it into the power of this arch-enemy to triumph over our belief in Christ as over a weak and a vain credulity. The prince of darkness will not in a single instance have to say on the great day of the winding up of the moral and the spiritual drama of this world, that here is a poor sinner whom you told to believe and be saved; and he did believe at your bidding, and because he trusted in your promises, and yet he is not saved, I claim him as my own. Do you not perceive, then, that the honour of Christ and the safety of the sinner are at one? and is it not clear that, from this quarter too, we might fetch a consideration directly fitted to

strengthen the confidence of all who have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel?

17. You will at once perceive that the doctrine of a great spiritual adversary, a created spirit, however, has nothing in common with the doctrine of Manicheism, or of two eternal principles of good and evil which share the universe between them. And you will also perceive, that it neither alleviates nor augments the difficulty which attaches to the deep enigma of the origin of evil. It only shifts the difficulty, but leaves it precisely on the same footing as before. It is not because of its subserviency to the solution of any transcendental question in theology, but because of its subserviency to Christian practice, that we have introduced this subject. It is because we believe that there are uses, important practical uses, in this revelation of a great spiritual adversary, who is named the Devil and Satan. When rightly viewed, it gives emphasis and encouragement to the most essential and elementary lessons of the gospel; and, more especially, to that which may be termed the most primary and rudimental of them all—we mean faith in Christ as our Redeemer from the guilt of sin. For look and endeavour, not to imagine any fancied picture of ours, but to realize the state of matters as placed before us in God's own description of the things of faith and of an unseen world. We there read of Jesus Christ having set forth on the enterprise of our world's recovery to God's favour, and that the main step in the execution of this was His own death as a sacrifice for sin. We further read of God's full acceptance of this sacrifice as a sufficient and ample reparation for the indignity of His broken law; and now that this great work is finished, the outrage done to His authority He looks on as effaced—so that He might now take the most heinous transgressors into friendship, and yet, notwithstanding that, His government over the universe which He has formed, remain vindicated and entire;—and that on this footing, the worst and most worthless of men, the chief of sinners, are invited, nay beseeched, nay commanded, to enter into reconciliation with God, and to stand before Him with all the confidence that they shall receive from Him all the favour which belongs to creatures who never had offended. The part that we have to take in this scheme of recovery is to believe on it—on which, it is said, that we shall be admitted into all its benefits. Now, in all this there is a power of direct encouragement, which has brought over thousands and tens of thousands to the faith of the

gospel. But I ask you to think furthermore of the other and the additional encouragement which lies in the consideration, that all this has been undertaken, and all this has been done, in opposition to a malignant and exalted spirit, the enemy of God; and who, after having wrested, as it were, for a time, from the hands of the Almighty, His moral government over the human family, is bent to the uttermost on retaining his ill-gotten ascendency over us. Is it conceivable, we ask, that God, or His Christ, will ever leave it in the power of the great adversary to say, that here is one poor sinner at least whom you did ask to trust in the pardon of the gospel, and who trusted accordingly, yet is not saved—I still retain my grasp over him, though at your bidding he believed, but has been disappointed?—Is it possible, we ask, that the great Champion of truth and righteousness in this high moral warfare, will give such an advantage to the father of lies and champion on the side of evil? Ponder well this consideration, and you will find, the longer you dwell upon it, that it is powerfully fitted to strengthen the faith of the believer; and with every reference which his mind makes to the keen rivalry and emulation that obtain between the Captain of our salvation and him who is styled the Prince of the Devils—he sees reason to rejoice in the thought that Christ's honour and his own safety are at one.

18. It is thus that our knowledge of a great spiritual adversary tends to enhance our confidence in Jesus Christ as the Lord our Righteousness, and so all the more to secure our justification. But there is another and great lesson which it is fitted to speed forward in our souls. This same knowledge of a great spiritual adversary, whom it was Christ's express errand to overcome, and whose works He came to destroy—this knowledge, we say, is fitted to enhance our confidence in Jesus Christ as the Lord our strength, and so all the more to secure our sanctification. The honour of Christ as our Mediator, and more especially as the champion who undertook this combat with Satan, and for the accomplishment of his overthrow, is directly concerned in the issue of our own earnest attempts to work out our salvation and to perfect our holiness. Should we fall short in our believing prayer, lifted up too in the name of Christ for grace to overcome the world, or, which is the same thing, to overcome him who is the prince and the power of the world—not only should we be baffled in our enterprise, but the Saviour would be baffled in His, which was to wrest from Satan his dominion over the hearts of

men; and to see, in all who put their trust in Himself, of the travail of His own soul and be satisfied. Now this surely ought, too, to be an influential consideration for confirming our trust in the Saviour. It should go to convince us the more, that not only are His honour and our safety at one, in as far as the object of peace with God is concerned, but that His honour and our success are at one, as far as the object of our aspiring earnestness after the pure and perfect morality of heaven is concerned—when we seek to be perfect, even as our Father in heaven is perfect. The sense of an adversary such as Satan, whose ill-gotten ascendency over the human race it is the object of our Saviour to dethrone, should stimulate and strengthen all our supplications for aid from the upper sanctuary, and give new hopefulness to our prayers. In other words, the reference of the mind to Satan as the common adversary, both of the Captain of salvation and of those who fight under Him, should not only animate us the more for the contest by the inspiration of the thought that our cause was Christ's cause, but serve to insure the victory by emboldening our petitions for the needful grace to help us; and so giving us a direct interest in the saying, that whatsoever ye ask in my name, ye shall receive—whatsoever ye ask believingly, according to your faith so shall it be done unto you.

19. Adverting to what I said of the respective instruments by which the Spirit of God, on the one hand, and the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience, on the other, wield their respective influences on the minds of men—that is, the first by the word, and the second by the world; I trust you will perceive the immense significancy of the apostle's direction, when telling his disciples that they must do all things in order to stand, he bids them put on the whole armour of God, and converts it into an argument for all the greater strenuousness, that they have not to wrestle against flesh and blood only, but against principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high places. By the very enumeration of the armour which he prescribes for that warfare, he lets them know what is the transcendental character of the warfare in which they are engaged; and without entering into the details of a Christian's equipment, I would say in the general, that he must not be satisfied with the mere performance that is done on the forthputting of his own natural powers, but with the performance that he is enabled for by a strength given from on high; or, in other words, that his life must be a compound of diligent performance with devout

and believing prayer—a lesson that is greatly enhanced and enforced by the consideration of that great spiritual enemy, over whom we must prevail, and from whose power we must be rescued ere we can enter into the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed is he that overcometh," it is said in one place. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," it is said in another. And when we recollect what is said in Scripture of the reality of this great infernal spirit, of the depth of his devices, and of his going about as a raging lion, seeking whom he may devour—it may well be said also respecting these statements of Scripture, which is said of them without exception, that all Scripture is profitable.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE GUILT OF MAN AS CHARGED UPON HIM BY HIS OWN NATURAL CONSCIENCE.

1. We have hitherto spoken only of man's universal corruption, and not as yet of man's universal guiltiness. These form two distinct objects of contemplation. When taking the one view, we look to the moral state of man as a thing of fact, or of descriptive and historical truth. When taking the other view, we look to this moral state as a thing of desert,—or in order to estimate what is the faultiness of man, and what the condemnation in which it involves him. In the former of these aspects, it holds relation with the category of the "*quid est;*" in the latter, it holds relation with the "*quid oportet.*" The two subjects, we repeat, are distinct from each other; and are taken cognizance of by distinct faculties—the one by the faculty of observation, whether external or internal; that is, whether by perception or consciousness; the other, by the moral sense or conscience of man. The two subjects, in fact, are as distinct as are the media in which they are seen—in other words, as distinct as the observational light and the moral light are from each other.

2. Now it must be obvious, and that at our very entrance upon the latter of these two subjects, that when man does conceive an evil purpose or perpetrate an evil deed, he has a conscience which tells him of the evil. He has a sense of right and wrong; and, in virtue of this, is not only capable of self-reproach, but of remonstrance against the iniquities and injuries of his fellow-men—and of remonstrance not promoted by anger alone, but by

an adverse moral judgment, or the feeling of an injustice that has been done to us. The apostle Paul makes the full acknowledgment of such a faculty or power of discernment in our nature. Men have that in them which is a law unto themselves; and in virtue of which also they can cast a regard beyond themselves, and either excuse or else accuse one another. There is nothing more palpable to all experience, or of more frequent and familiar exhibition in society, than this habit of moral reckoning—exemplified in almost every company we enter, and of spontaneous operation in our own hearts every day of our lives. It is, in fact, a constant tendency thus to sit in judgment, both on ourselves and on our fellow-men: and hence the grave rebuke, or the stern and severe accusation, or sometimes the indignant outcry, on the one hand; and on the other, the shame, the self-dissatisfaction, and sometimes the ever-haunting and agonizing remorse. All this is too obvious to be dwelt upon; and as a proof that it does not owe its origin to Christianity but to nature, we meet with it among the disciples of every religion all the world over—beside that the authorship of ancient times is full of it, long before Christianity was ever heard of.

3. Thus far, then, we have a voucher or testimony in man himself, not only for his being in a state of corruption, but for his being in a state of guiltiness. When he sees an evil deed or evil disposition, whether in himself or others, he can not only take knowledge or observation of it as a thing of fact, but he can pronounce upon it as a thing of culpability, and condemns it accordingly. Conscience feels no difficulty in testifying to the demerit of actual and particular sins. To this the light of nature is altogether competent. But then theology tells, not only of the actual, but the original. It has transmuted the whole subject into certain dogmata, which it has invested with a certain nomenclature of its own. For, like every other science, it has its own articles and its own technology; and it blends the consideration of guilt with what it says of man's original corruption as well as with what it says of his actual sins. Now, the question is, in how far the unaided moral judgment coincides with the deliverances of Scripture upon this subject; and when theology, which professes to found all its dicta upon the Word of God, speaks of a guilt as being somehow implicated or bound up with the original depravity of our nature, it were interesting to know whether, and to what

extent, the light of nature, or the voice of that conscience which is in every man, is able to go along with it.

4. It might help our reply to this question, first to conceive a world where only some did sin, but not all, and then a world where all sinned universally, and without exception. It surely will not be pretended that the universality of sin in the latter world does away the guilt of it. If a single man fall into transgression, the conscience is quite clear and unambiguous in pronouncing on his guilt and consequent liability to punishment. If another do the same, this does not remove the culpability of the former; and we are but presented with two culprits instead of one. And so of a third or fourth, or any additional number. These argumentations do not cancel the guilt—they only multiply the guilty. If there be a world where only one-half of the population have sinned—then one-half are guilty, and the other half are free of the imputation. Or, lastly, if it be a world where all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God—then all are liable to be reckoned with, and all would be found guilty before Him. There is nothing in the guilt universal that can do away the guilt particular. The one is but a summation of the other. They are the items which sustain the totality, and there is nought in the totality to extinguish the items. The guilt of the individual is not lost, nor should it be lost sight of in the guilt of the species. The conscience is every way as clear in pronouncing the generical, as in pronouncing any of the single or separate sentences—as clear in affirming the whole world to be guilty before God, as in affirming of every man in the world, that each must bear his own burden, or that each is chargeable with the guilt of his own sin. There is no more difficulty in pronouncing the one verdict than the other. Thus far, then, our way is clear, and if we have yet got to any onward point in the argument, it is most assuredly by a series of very closely placed stepping-stones, or of almost identical propositions, that we have arrived at it.

5. But as yet the reasoning has only had to do with actual sins; nor have we got beyond the consideration of the guilt which attaches to these, whether jointly or severally. We have said no more than that the actual sins of the many are to be judged of on no other principle than the actual sins of the few; or that the actual sins of a whole world are to be judged of and pronounced upon as are the actual sins of each and every of its single inhabitants. But it is not on the guilt as chargeable on

or as implicated with actual sins, whether in the bulk or the detail, that there is any difficulty—it is in the guilt which theologians have charged upon, or have implicated with what they term original sin, that the difficulty lies. Now, we have already seen how it is that with sins, viewed not in respect of their desert, but simply in respect of their existence, the actual does merge into the original. It is not a mere theological way of viewing the subject, for man cannot look to it philosophically without viewing it in the same way. It is a generalization which he cannot avoid making, for it is forced upon him by the phenomena which are before his eyes. Let two worlds be imagined, each peopled with its own family of rational and accountable creatures; and in the first of which all were perfectly righteous, while in the second there never was an individual who did not fall into a transgression against some one or other of God's commandments—and then who would not ascribe this constant and unfailing difference to a generic or constitutional difference in the two populations? If all past history, and all present observation, warrant us in affirming that all men hitherto have been sinners, should we not predict with the utmost confidence that, unless by a miraculous reversal of the laws and tendencies of human nature, all men afterwards to be born will prove sinners still? with as great confidence, in fact, as we should predict of any universal and constitutional peculiarity that belonged to some species of living creature, that it would be transmitted henceforth and without fail among all the future descendants of the tribe. The sin when committed is an actual thing—the sinfulness, or prior tendency to sin, is an original thing; and when we infer the original from the actual, we are only saying what to all men must be abundantly obvious, that a universal sinning implies a universal sinfulness. We cannot look intelligently to the object which we are now contemplating, without coming to this conclusion; nor is there aught in our so doing which should at all obscure or still less obliterate the sense we have of the guiltiness of sin. The philosopher and the peasant have an equally clear perception by the eye, of the difference between one colour and another, and feel alike the same peculiar sensation which each impresses on the retina, although the one does, and the other does not, speculate on the cause of the difference; or tell of the composition of light, and what rays are retained or what others are reflected from the surfaces of bodies. And the philosopher and the peasant can discriminate with equal accu-

racy by the ear between one kind of sound and another, though the one does, and the other does not, speculate on causes; or tell of atmospherical vibrations, and the impressions thereby made on the tympanum. And in the same manner, the philosopher and the peasant can perceive alike by the moral sense the difference of character between one action and another, though the one only can, and the other cannot, view them as mental phenomena in connexion with their causes, or speculate on the prior psychology which gives birth to the various deeds and dispositions of men. Nor it is necessary that he should. Place within his view a voluntary act, and he can discern at once its moral character; nor would it help him in the least to a right estimate, whether of its culpability or its virtuousness, that he was able to trace his way among the remoter antecedents of the phenomenon which stands before him. He needs but one step backward, and needs no more. He must see the act, and the intent or disposition which prompted the act. Having these, he has all that is necessary for feeling aright and pronouncing aright on the deed in question; and so seeks no further. To come at a true verdict on the merit or demerit of any given action, even the one being rewardable and the other punishable, all he requires to know is the outward performance and the inward purpose which gave birth to it; and with this one sequence of two terms before him, he has all the materials which are requisite for a right moral judgment on these points; and though he may enlarge his metaphysics by the prosecution of a search among the anterior or higher terms, there is no discovery which he can make on this walk that should in the least affect the ethical determination which he had before come to. The question, what prompted the act? is essential to a right moral judgment thereupon; and to form such a judgment, we must know the proximate cause of the act in the disposition which went immediately before it. But we do not require to investigate or to know anything of the remoter causes, whether these are to be found in the mind of the individual agent, or to be found in his parentage, near or distant, and the transmission of a hereditary influence from them to all their posterity. We do not need, therefore, for pronouncing aright on the desert of an action—as consisting of an act along with the disposition which gave rise to it—to move any further question than the one already specified, namely, What prompted the act? We do not need, I say, to move the higher or more transcendental

question, What prompted the disposition? This is a transcendentalism of which common minds may be wholly incapable; and yet they have just as vivid, and let me add, as just a perception of the right and wrong, as the most philosophic and profound of our mental analysts. Let the philosophical speculation of these prior tendencies and influences be what it may, or let the theological doctrine of original as distinguished from actual sin be what it may—it leaves the real character and desert of the sins themselves just where it found them—the rightful object of blame or moral disapprobation, the rightful object of condemnation and punishment.

6. The felt difficulty in the adjustment of this matter lies in the imagination of a certain physical or mechanical necessity which springs up in the mind so soon as we begin to speculate on acts and dispositions in connexion with the antecedent influences which brought them forth; or view them as being at all resolvable into a previous causation, which overrules and gave rise to them. It is then that the idea of force comes to be suggested; and along with this the vague yet strong feeling, that when force begins responsibility ceases—or that what a man is forced to, he does under compulsion, and can no longer be held accountable for. It is not the time yet to unravel this confusion, as we hope to do afterwards; nor shall we attempt fully to meet or finally to dispose of this objection till we have taken up the subject of philosophical necessity in connexion with the theological doctrine of predestination, when we expect to show, what indeed we hold to be demonstrable, that the viciousness and so the guilt of any evil disposition in the mind lies in the nature of it, and not in its cause. Meanwhile, let it suffice now to bring forward one very obvious consideration, which, if it do not obtain for us a favourable, may at least have the effect of suspending an adverse judgment upon this question. What we advert to is the distinction—a clear and undoubted distinction surely—between two sorts or descriptions of force in relation to the will. There is a force *ab extra*, which might compel a man against his will—acting, let us say, on the muscles of his body, and so great as to overbear the honest resistance of his mind; and there is a force *ab intra*, operating upon the will, and so as to carry the will along with it—compelling a man to act, let us allow, yet to act not as before against his will, but with his will—a force on or in the will itself, and in virtue of which it is fixedly and resolutely bent, either on the performance of a deed,

or on the attainment of an object which it may happen to be set upon. The former kind of force does away with all the moral characteristics of an action; and however mischievous it may happen to be, there can be no guilt, no responsibility incurred for it by the immediate agent. On the question whether the other kind of force cancels in like manner the demerit of an evil action, I would make a plain appeal to the moral sense and consciences of men. Let them but figure two individuals, one of whom had a doubly greater thirst than the other for the blood of a fellow-man, or for the property which belonged to him, and so was doubly more intent on an act of theft or murder, insomuch that, if you should meet the first rather than the second, there would be a doubly greater risk of suffering death or robbery at his hands. The simple question is, Which of them is felt and judged by all to be the greater criminal of the two—he of whom you had the greater, or he of whom you had the less reason to apprehend some foul and dreadful perpetration, should you have the misfortune to fall in with him? Would not the greater condemnation, by the instant and decisive voice of all men, fall upon the first, or upon him from whom the greater risk was apprehended, of some fell and iniquitous violence? And should the risk mount so high that it ceased to be risk, and came the length of certainty, would not this but aggravate the sense which you had of the man's wickedness? It is when it reaches this point, in fact, that his depravity comes to its maximum—or his guilt, as if then the topstone were laid upon it, rises to its acme. Such is our real moral estimate of the degrees or differences in point of criminality between two men presented with the same opportunities and temptations to some given delinquency, of whom you could only say respecting the first, that there was the chance of his committing the crime at some time; and of the second, that there was the certainty of his committing the crime at all times. This very certainty, so far from annulling his criminality, marks him out as the more thorough and determined reprobate of the two; nor does it alter the case, although the certainty were translated into language and denominated by such terms as necessity, irresistible necessity, irresistible force. These, in fact, which are thought by some to extenuate the criminality, or even do it away, serve but to deepen and enhance it. It were, in truth, the perfection of human depravity, it would mark his iniquity as full, if we could say of any man that he cannot cease from sin—just as it

marks the absolute perfection of God's truth, when the Bible says of Him that He cannot lie; or when it says that He cannot deny Himself, we are told that He cannot act otherwise than is consistent with a moral excellence that is infinite and unchangeable. The necessity for thus acting does not annihilate—it but magnifies and exalts the virtuousness of the Godhead—any more than the certainty, or if you will the necessity, that a man should always acquit himself with fidelity and honour, would annihilate, when in fact it would stamp upon this virtuousness of his its highest designation. Say that I could depend as much upon his truth as upon the constancy of nature; or that his word was as surely and invariably followed up by its fulfilment as the ascent of mercury in the tube of a thermometer followed at all times the application of heat to its bulb—there is necessity here, a necessity which fixes the character, and yet makes it the object of our superlative admiration. And ere we indulge this feeling, or award to the noble disposition which calls it forth the testimony of our applause, we never once think of seeking backward among the anterior causes which gave it birth. If but placed before our eyes, enough for us that it is there; and to awake our moral reverence and regard, we have simply to look at it as an object of contemplation, and look no further, nor inquire how it was originated—whether it came by hereditary descent, through a line of chivalrous and high-minded ancestors, or sprung up under an influence from other quarters known or unknown. But what is thus true of human worth is also true of human worthlessness. We detest and denounce it for itself, and irrespectively of its causes. We feel and pronounce upon it at once as an odious spectacle, whatever may have conjured it into being; nor would it extinguish, or even reduce, our moral antipathy, though told it was a thing of generation, and propagated invariably and inveterately, as if by a deadly virus, from father to son, or from one reprobate to another, along the line of a sadly corrupt and degraded family. Let a man but give way to the unsophisticated movements of his own heart, and cast his eye on this generation of vipers, this seed of evil-doers, these transgressors from the womb—why, if he thus but simply look upon them, he cannot but loathe them as the hateful objects of his deepest because of his moral abomination.

7. But within our present subject, there lies another question of far easier solution than the one which has now been engaging us, and of great practical value. In treating of man's guilt as

charged upon him by his own conscience, we of course view this matter in the light of our own minds, and apart from revelation. But we should not forget of this light, that, if it be of deficient judgment in the ethics, it is of still more deficient knowledge in the objects of theology. The very existence of a God may be only guessed at, or seen but uncertainly, by the darkened understanding. Now this is the place at which we should recall our former conclusions under the head of natural theology—when attempting to estimate the duty that we owe to but a probable or doubtful God, and of consequence the guilt incurred by the violation of it. It is of the utmost importance to observe, that, even in this state of obscurity—this moral and intellectual twilight of the soul—the conscience tells us of a duty towards God, and so of a guilt against Him, if, in the spirit either of heedlessness or defiance, we fail to perform it. If it be a blameworthy thing to know God and yet not to glorify Him as God—it is alike blameworthy, in kind at least if not in degree, to guess at or but imagine a God, and yet not to care for or inquire after Him. If in their knowledge of God it was the condemnation of men that they liked not to retain the knowledge of Him, it also is a matter of just condemnation, if, in their ignorance of God, they liked not to recover the knowledge of Him; —so that when even visited by the thought of Him, they did not prosecute that thought, they sought not after Him, if haply they might find Him. It is thus that we can fasten the guilt of ungodliness, even on men the farthest back in the wilds of heathenism; but the practically important thing is that we can also fasten it on the natives of Christendom—the every-day men of our congregations and parishes, who are still in their embryo and incipient, or in other words, their natural state in respect to religion. Their own consciences can tell that, dimly and distantly as it is that they conceive of God, there is a solemn obligation to inquire after Him, and duteously to entertain the question, What willest thou me to think and to do? and their own consciences can tell, that, in the want of this duteousness, they may be rightly dealt with as offenders, and proceeded against accordingly;—insomuch, that instead of coming forth with any formal demonstration of their guilt, they might save you the trouble of it—for should you charge them instanter therewith, there is such a groundwork of judgment, and conscience, and moral sensibility within their bosoms, that the sense of their own minds will go as instantly along with you. They do

have a sufficient notion of a Divinity for this—a sufficient sense both of the guilt which they incur, and of the danger which they are braving, when they withstand the reproaches and criminations of the minister who tells them of these things—and this whether their resistance be in the form of apathetic neglect, or of sturdy and resolute defiance.

8. This natural conscience, this law of the heart, is a mighty help to the minister from the very outset of his ministrations. There is not a congregation, however initial or rudimentary its state may be, which does not present him with a fit subject for his demonstrations of their sin and of their danger. We do not speak of such philosophic demonstrations as we have now been touching on, but of an argument far more palpable, and the materials of which are so far in their possession, that, when speaking to them of God and of a future reckoning, you may speak home to the perceptions and sensibilities even of the most untutored minds within reach of the appeal which you are making to them. If Felix trembled when Paul preached to him of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, so might you awaken the terror of thieves and drunkards in homelier guise—clothed in the rags of poverty, and not like him in the robes of office; and whom still in the veriest depths of their ignorance and squalid poverty, you might arouse from their apathy, when you ask them, How they shall lie down in the devouring fire, how dwell amid everlasting burnings? There is that within the heart of every man, which, when evoked by a call or remonstrance from without, might make him alive to the sense of an angry God, and of a vengeance now brooding in the treasure-house of the Almighty's wrath, and to break forth at length on all the children of iniquity. It is thus that the law is still a schoolmaster for bringing unto Christ; and that by the terrors of the law you may do what the apostle did before you—persuade men. We shall not prescribe a rigid and invariable order in the topics of pulpit address to your future congregations; but sure we are, that, in its threatenings and rebukes, the law is often, in the hands of the Spirit, a most effectual precursor and pioneer by which to make way for the gospel. It is like the sense of distress preceding the cry for relief from it—when nought more welcome to the awakened sinner's ear than the tidings that to him a Saviour has been born.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE GUILT OF MAN AS CHARGED UPON HIM BY SCRIPTURE.

1. It is superfluous to prove that Scripture charges upon every man the guilt of his own actual and personal offences. This is what natural conscience feels no difficulty in doing; and it is done just as currently as a thing of course, and about which there could be no question in the Bible. On this matter the law of the heart and the law of revelation are completely at one. When we read the narrative of the Fall, our own sense of justice does not reclaim at least against that judicial allotment by which each of the parties in this event was made to suffer for his own proper and particular transgression. It was said and executed upon Adam, "In the day thou eatest of the forbidden tree thou shalt die." We do not speak at present of the proportion which the punishment bore to the disobedience —but of the rightfulness wherewith that punishment, whatever it might be, was made to fall on the perpetrator of the unlawful deed and not upon another. Now this individual was expanded into a general procedure; and is expressly announced indeed in the form of a general principle or rule—"The soul that sinneth it shall die." Each man is to be held guilty because of his own iniquities; and each man is to be condemned and to suffer because of his own guilt. And as if to fortify and define in utmost possible fulness this rule of distributive equity, it is added—"The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. xviii. 20). It is needless for the establishment of a matter so obvious to quote any more of holy writ—whether from its particular narratives or moral sayings. Thus far there is a full coincidence between conscience and Scripture; and by neither of these two great authorities is it ever questioned—that on the head of the offender lies the guilt, and that on him rather than on another should be laid the penalty of his own misdoings.

2. We have already affirmed, in the preceding chapter, of this judgment on the guilt incurred by man for his own evil deeds, that it was not affected by the consideration that deeds

of wickedness implied a prior disposition to wickedness; and that neither was it affected by any opinion which we might form respecting the origin of this disposition. We feel quite sure that evil deeds do imply a disposition to evil; and we also feel quite sure that this disposition must have some cause, some origin or other. But whatever the cause may have been, it does not arrest the instant disapproval which springs up in the mind, on the contemplation of a voluntary trespass against the rule of right, nor yet the sense of its just liability to condemnation and punishment. Let the disposition have come by inheritance from one's own ancestors—this does not affect our moral judgment of the criminality and guilt of one's own sins. It is irrespective of any view taken in regard to the cause of the sinfulness, when we give our consent to the equity of the proposition—that the soul which sinneth, it shall die. Even though told of this sinfulness, that it is owing to the sinfulness of parents, transmitted by a physiological law, which as much insured that there should be a descent of the same human depravity from father to son, as there is of the same human form—this does not lessen in our estimation the hatefulness, and neither does it extinguish, and we think it does not even extenuate our sense of the guilt, which attaches to the wicked and wrong doings that have been thus germinated. There may be as sure a transmission of the same mental as there is of the same material likeness in the great family of man, from generation to generation; and yet the men of each generation are both held by conscience and held by Scripture to be distinctly responsible for their own personal sins—whatever their derivation may have been, or whatever pedigree either experience or revelation may have assigned to them. And all this I would have you to understand—though this requires your close and earnest attention—all this without prejudice to the rule that the son shall not bear the iniquity of his father. The son may inherit the father's sinful disposition, and, under the promptings of that disposition, may commit hundreds of sins in his own person, and be reckoned with for these only—not for the father's sins, you will observe, but only for his own—though the sinful disposition which gave birth to them should be the consequent of a like disposition in the parentage from which he has descended. He may have got his sinful nature from his parents; and yet the guilt of the sins committed by him under the instigations of that nature may be exclusively his

own. In tracing the matter upwards, we may find a cause for the existence of his sins in the prior corruption wherewith his parents may have been tainted; and yet in the judicial procedure of Him who sitteth above, both he as well as his fathers may, in respect to the guilt of their sins, have been each dealt with only for his own personal transgressions and not for those of another. This is the rule which the prophet announces in the remonstrances that he holds with the children of Israel; and any man who looks profoundly or rather patiently to the question, will see that there is really nothing to infringe this principle in the fact of ours being a hereditary or transmitted corruption—no incompatibility whatever between the two positions, that, while our sinfulness has come to us from our ancestors, the guilt of our sins is our own.

3. It is quite clear that the Bible goes thus far—for each of these propositions is expressly affirmed in it. It tells us that in virtue of their descent from Adam all men have a corrupt nature transmitted by him, or derived from him; and it also tells us that for the sins which because of this nature each man perpetrates, each man is personally responsible. Scripture makes no question of the compatibility of these two things; and though it may not say so in as many words, it must hold so, else it would be charging itself with contradiction. We need not multiply quotations, but satisfy ourselves with one or two which are absolutely decisive. We are told that that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and we are told also of the moral characteristics of this flesh being such, that they who are in the flesh—they who remain what nature made them, cannot please God—that the carnal or fleshly mind, the mind in its first or natural state, is enmity against God: and connecting this as cause and consequent with all actual transgressions, relating the one to the other as a fountainhead to its streams, it further tells us what the works or products of the flesh are, and the sort of particular sins or vices which itself enumerates—adultery, fornications, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like—a list, you will observe, of specific offences, incident to all men, just because of the native or inborn tendency which all men have to these things—received by them at their first breath, growing up with them from infancy, and at length efflorescing, along the career of youth or manhood, into deeds of iniquity and bitter fruits of transgres-

sion in the actual and visible history of our lives. So inveterate and universal is this tendency, that to be effectually delivered from it, we must undergo a second birth, indispensable to all—insomuch that what our Saviour said to Nicodemus must be said to each man. Indeed it is not especially said of Nicodemus, but said comprehensively and generically of the whole species—except a man be born again, except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see, or cannot enter into, the kingdom of God. And then, as we had the works of the flesh enumerated in particular sins, so we have the fruits of the Spirit enumerated in particular graces or virtues. But what we have specially to do with at present is the guilt which attaches to acts of disobedience, and which are done just because of our hereditary and universal disposition to these acts; or because, the possessors of a corrupt nature, we are the children of disobedience. Now, while told in one place that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, we are told in another, where the works of the flesh are particularly enumerated, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. It is because of the guilt attached to the doings that, when reckoned with for them, we incur the sentence of having forfeited a blissful eternity. The consideration that these doings are the proceeds of anterior corruption, by which all humanity, in virtue of the tainted origin from which it has sprung, or its being born in the flesh, is throughout pervaded—has no effect in averting or mitigating this sentence, or in arresting the judgment pronounced on those who, when called to give account of the deeds done in their body, will receive every man according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. The plea that we did agreeably to our nature, or we did according to the inclinations we were born with, will be no avail in staying the condemnation awarded on the last day to the workers of iniquity—"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." It will not excuse them for being the workers of iniquity, that they can allege of themselves, as being the descendants of a corrupt species, that they were the children of iniquity.

4. What we have hitherto laboured to make manifest is, that the guilt which both conscience and Scripture agree in attaching to particular sins, is still attached, on the part of both these authorities, to particular sins, notwithstanding all that is said of the prior sinful disposition in which they originate—even

although that disposition may have been introduced in the way of which the Bible informs us, when it tells of Adam having acquired a corrupt nature by his own disobedience, and transmitted that corruption to all his posterity. Both by our moral sense, and by the voice of revelation, each individual of that posterity is chargeable with the guilt of his own sins—although but for the fall of our first parents, and consequent depravity of the human race, these sins might never have been perpetrated. And this is the whole amount of the distinction which some theologians make between the original and the actual. All men commit actual sins, because of an original and prior tendency to sin in all men—a tendency derived they allow from Adam—insomuch, that because Adam sinned all men are sinners; yet responsible, they say, only for their own sins, and not for the sin committed by Adam in Paradise. It may be said of them, that they allow the original corruption but not the original guilt—allowing, as they do, of no other guilt than what is incurred by the actual sins committed under this corruption. We do not think that the conscience of man goes any further than this; and they do not think that the Bible goes any further than this. Now, it is at this point that we think the Bible shoots a-head, as it were, of the conscience; or that the light of revelation on this subject too, as it does on many other subjects, overpasses the light of nature. We do not wonder that the Christian tells us a great deal more than the natural theology of many other doctrines which could be specified. Let us not wonder, therefore, although the one should tell us a great deal more of the doctrine of original sin than the other. These two lights, the greater and the lesser, are at one on the subject of the guilt chargeable on every man for his own particular if voluntary offences—and this whether viewed respectively or irrespectively of the prior disposition in which they originated. But when made to understand from the one, or by the light of revelation, that men are chargeable with guilt not only for their own proper and particular transgressions, but have the guilt laid to their charge of that specific transgression into which Adam fell in the garden of Eden—that first act of disobedience which was then and there committed by the great progenitor of the human family—it is at this point that the light of nature, we will not say contradicts the statements of Scripture, but does not go along with it, as being not able to apprehend the rightness or reasonableness thereof. Far be it from us to insinuate that it is not most right

and reasonable to acquiesce in such a statement, if statement it really be; but then it will acquiesce in the thing as a matter of pure revelation—a part of God's dealings with the world which we could never have discovered from beneath: and which, even after discovery has been made of it from above, we take on the authority of the Bible alone—just as we take what it tells us of the divinity of the Son, or the personality of the Spirit, or the existence and agency of those infernal powers which are seeking for the mastery of the human species;—topics these of which the prior theology of nature gave no information, and which, now that Christianity has made them authentically known, lie as much beyond the range of a mere natural theology as before.

5. Let it not be once imagined that we affirm any conflict or contrariety between the light of nature and the light of revelation. We only affirm that the former may have made known what the latter cannot so apprehend of its own unborrowed resources, as either to have discovered it in its reality before, or to have discerned it in its justness and reasonableness afterwards. And yet nothing more reasonable, than that after being laid before us as one of the informations of Holy Writ, we should place upon it our implicit reliance, and adopt it as one of the articles of our faith. It forms but one example out of the many, in which the greater of the two lights is found to shine upon spaces or departments of truth ulterior to all which the lesser can reach, or is able to recognise as true on any other principle than —thus saith the Lord. Yet having once ascertained it to be indeed a saying of His, it is one of reason's highest exhibitions —the clearest and most unquestionable dictate of a sound Christian philosophy—that this principle should be all in all with us. When God speaks to us, it is our part to be silent; and having satisfied ourselves with the credentials of a professed message from him, nothing remains but that, with the docility of little children, we should learn and receive the contents of it—casting down our lofty imaginations, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought of our hearts in captivity to the obedience of Christ. Otherwise we are in danger of asserting with one and the same breath, not only the sufficiency of reason, but the insufficiency of revelation.

6. It is well to have laid down how far the conscience of man goes along with the statements of Scripture, respecting that universal guilt of our race which flows out of their inborn and

universal depravity. We believe it to go so far as to make it perfectly consistent with the laws and sensibilities of our moral nature, that both the dispositions and the acts which result from this depravity, prior and inborn though it be, do form the rightful subject of a judicial reckoning, and should be condemned and dealt with accordingly. But though our conscience goes along with such a treatment of our own wilful acts, if only wilful, however originated, and therefore although originated in the way which Scripture tells of—our conscience, I think, does not go along with—I am far from saying that it contradicts though it cannot follow—the ulterior revelation of our being reckoned with for the guilt of Adam's specific transgression when he fell in Paradise. This is the doctrine of the direct and proper imputation to us of Adam's sin, and for which we have but the authority of Scripture—it being a subject, we cannot say against, but beyond the light of unaided nature.

7. In regard to this subject of imputation, there is what may be called a middle view taken by Edwards in his book on Original Sin. He subordinates, if I may so express myself, the imputation derived from Adam to the corruption derived from Adam. He conceives that the guilt which rests upon us is not the guilt of Adam's act of disobedience, but the guilt of our own proneness to disobey—which proneness, however, we inherit as the corrupt children of a corrupt parentage. We think that he has conclusively demonstrated, in his book on the Freedom of the Will, that man is blamable for his wrong moral dispositions, in whatever way these dispositions may have been originated; but we think he has not given the whole truth on the subject of the imputation of Adam's sin; and though the informations of Scripture appear to us to be carried further than the reason or the moral sense of man can follow them—yet on the authority of revelation, and in obedience to the analogy of the faith, we feel inclined to the highest view that has been given on the subject of this imputation.

8. Yet we do not wonder that President Edwards should have advocated the theory of a mediate imputation. It was not he who first devised it—for, long before him, it had been set forth, on the one hand, by certain dissentients from the creed of the Reformed Churches on the Continent; and been condemned, on the other, by the sentences of the ecclesiastical body. But we can imagine that it is precisely such a view of the subject as would recommend itself to the mind of Edwards; and particu-

larly after he had so clearly and forcibly demonstrated the perfect consistency which obtains between the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and the responsibility of man for his voluntary actions. If the moral character of the disposition or the act, if the virtuousness or viciousness thereof, do not lie in their cause but in their nature—then, however caused, they are still, if good, the rightful objects of approbation or reward; and if evil, the rightful objects of condemnation and punishment. It was very natural that, fresh from the triumph and success of his irresistible argument on the human will, by which he proves that voluntary actions though necessary are nevertheless moral, and that the doer of them is accountable—it was most natural that, on turning his attention to the subject of original sin, he should transfer the same principle to this new object of contemplation, and try to establish, that the guilt which Adam's sin had entailed on his posterity was through the medium of the corrupt nature which he had entailed on them; or, in other words, that instead of being sharers in the actual and personal guilt of Adam's own transgression in the garden of Eden, they only became sharers of a like guilt, because sharers of a like corruption, which Adam took on at the moment of his fall, and which he transmitted to all the men of all the future generations of our race. He might have thought that in this way he could rationalize the doctrine of original sin, as much as he had succeeded in rationalizing the whole of that theology which stands connected with the necessity of human actions; and which consists of the cognate doctrines of predestination, and election, and particular redemption, and the perseverance of the saints. We confess that we hailed it as a great acquisition, when we first became acquainted with Edwards' view of the mediate imputation, and rejoiced in it as another instance of the accordance which obtains between the evangelism of the Bible, and those discoveries which are gained by a deeper insight into the constitution of human nature, or into the secrets of mental and metaphysical science. It is the parallelism which the Scripture affirms between the imputation of Adam's guilt and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which has broken up this illusion, as I now regard it to be—because not consistent either with the statements of the Bible, or with the findings of experimental Christianity. If even the most perfect of the regenerate on earth had no higher desert to trust in than the deeds of his new obedience, it would not avail for his justification—seeing that his best services are alloyed by

the sad mixture and instigation of his remaining infirmities: and therefore it is that he prizes, as the most sacred and excellent of all his treasures, the righteousness of Christ, which he is invited to make his own, and to make full use of as his plea for acceptance with God. But if the believer, or the man who is saved in Christ, is thus taken into favour, in virtue of a direct part and interest in the merit of his great Head, the Mediator of the New Covenant—then to maintain and complete the parallelism between the first and the second Adam, the man who is not a believer, and lost in Adam, is an outcast from the Divine favour, in virtue of a direct part and interest in the guilt of him, whom God has been pleased to deal with as the representative of all his posterity. The jurisprudence of the one imputation, viewed merely on the principles of jurisprudence, is in every way as mysterious, or as much beyond the ken of our natural discernment, as the jurisprudence of the other; and there is as great reason why on the first imputation as well as the second, and on the second as well as the first, we should yield a like deference to the authority of revelation.

9. The truth is, that we shall never attain to a sound and scriptural theology, or rather shall never settle down in the certain and satisfied possession of its attainable truths, till, when we have reached the borders of the light that is inaccessible, we shall then be content to be wise up to that which is written, and refrain from every idle and useless and hurtful aspiration after the wisdom that is beyond it. When we speak of Edwards having so far rationalized the doctrine of predestination, we are not insensible to a limit here also, which represses every attempt of the transcendental theology to overpass it, and where it is our best and highest wisdom to refrain from any further effect to scan the counsels of Him who is unsearchable. There lies a deep enigma in the origin of evil which we cannot penetrate; and which on the subject of predestination brings us at last to the question, whither Paul brought it—"Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" And there is an enigma alike unfathomable in the jurisprudence by which we are made the partakers, whether of a guilt that another has incurred or of a righteousness that another has rendered. And let us not think that we make our escape from the region of darkness and difficulty on this latter question, by relinquishing the doctrine of an immediate imputation, and passing away from it to the doctrine of a mediate imputation. The truth is, that one of the most

grievous penalties, nay, perhaps the chief penalty, annexed to sinning, is a moral penalty, or the tendency under which we are thereby laid of sinning more. Every act of sin is followed up by the increase of a sinful disposition. This was experienced most signally of all on the commission of the very first sin. In consequence of it, Adam became not only a guilty but a depraved creature. The act of sinning strengthened the inclination, and at length established the habit of future sinning. But not only did the first sin become the parent of future sins—the first sinner became the parent of future sinners. The corruption of Adam was transmitted to all his posterity. The streams partook in the quality of the fountain; and the morbid virus which by his own deed had been engendered in the constitution of Adam, every child of Adam, prior to any deed of his own, is found, historically, and in fact, to have brought into the world with him. Every single specimen of humanity is charged with it—insomuch that all of us are sinners from the womb—a truth not only deponed to us in Scripture, but confirmed by universal observation; and not only do we read of it as an article of faith, but we appeal to it as a fact—that, whether we are reckoned with as sharers in the guilt of Adam or not, we are so dealt with as to be sharers in the penalty annexed to it. This is palpable to the eye of the senses, in that all men die, and still more palpable in that all men sin. Whether we inherit the curse or not, we inherit the penalty, and the worst part of it too. We have all been dealt with as sinners, and this anterior to any personal or actual sin of ours—in that each of us hath been born into the world with a sinful disposition, and so hath had sin's worst punishment laid upon him. Because Adam sinned he became a sinful creature; and not only so, but because Adam sinned we became sinful creatures also. It was not because we ourselves had sinned that we became corrupt—for, radically and primarily, our corruption is not the consequent but the cause of our sins. Nevertheless it is a consequent, but the consequent of Adam's sin—not of ours. Now, the question is, whether this be a juridical act on the part of God, or if it be referable to a mere act and exercise of His sovereignty? It depends on the view we take of it, which may be either as a juridical or simply as a natural economy—it depends upon this whether we shall be the advocates of an immediate or of a mediate imputation. If the circumstance of corrupt Adam having begot a corrupt posterity be regarded only as a part of

that general economy in nature, in virtue of which each parent gives birth to a progeny of its own likeness, whether in the animal or vegetable world—this will exclude the immediate, but leaves untouched all the reasons for a mediate imputation, and which charges guilt upon man, not however as the inheritor of Adam's guilt, but as the inheritor of Adam's corruption. The man is held to be in fault, not immediately because of Adam's sin, but mediately because of his own sin—the fruit of that corrupt tendency to evil which he derived from Adam. The advocates of such a system, however, have come far short of their aim, if they think that it has at all helped them to dissipate the mysteriousness of this ordination. So far from dispersing, we do not even think that it alleviates the mystery. We can understand how the corruption that gathered on the character of Adam, in virtue of his having sinned, should be the fruit of a judicial award, and so form part of his punishment; but should it also be held as a judicial award upon his descendants, that they too should be punished by being made to inherit the corruption of Adam?—this can only be done by an imputation of guilt to them, the principle of which we do not comprehend. And yet if, instead of connecting it with an imputation, we look on it simply as a dispensation, like the arbitrary law of descent which runs throughout all the species of organized nature—this too is on a principle that we can as little comprehend. The principle of a dispensation, in fact, is as much above and beyond our reach as the principle of an imputation. If it be said that we have been made corrupt because we had sinned in Adam, and so are held guilty as he was, and treated accordingly—this may have been the procedure; but it is a procedure, we conceive, the reason or the principle of which is to us inscrutable. But surely it is alike inscrutable that we have been made corrupt, though not in virtue of any previous reckoning by which we were dealt with as guilty creatures—for where there is no guilt, there is, I would not say merit, but there is at least innocence; and how such a grievous infliction as that of a corrupt nature should have been laid upon parties who were innocent, is a procedure of which we are equally unable to apprehend the reason or the principle. In short, turn which way we will, we have now got on a region of transcendentalism, where both the one alternative and the other of the question which engages us is encompassed with difficulties; and on which, therefore, we repeat, it is our highest

wisdom that we should make revelation the supreme arbiter, and defer to its authority alone.

10. The whole analogy of nature should teach us to acquiesce in this conclusion. Many are the phenomena presented to us there which we are compelled to receive as true facts on the evidence of observation, however unable we are to assign the place which belongs to them in the scheme of God's administration. And sometimes also may we be compelled to receive as true doctrines on the evidence of Scripture which we find impossible to be explained, when viewed as evolutions of the divine government, or of the policy, thus to speak, of Heaven's administration. When we look to the animal creation, we behold an endless diversity there between the various species, in respect both of their capacities for enjoyment, and of the disabilities, nay, the pains and sufferings to which they are subjected by the very nature which God hath bestowed on them. It is not for men to complain that they are not angels, any more than it is for reptiles to complain that they are not creatures of a better and nobler existence than themselves. We can give no absolute vindication of these things, any more than we can of men being formed in the likeness of their fallen parent, instead of being formed in his likeness when unfallen, which was after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. All we can say is, that even this latter instance is of a piece with God's dealings throughout the whole of animated nature; or with that law of generation according to their species both in animals and vegetables, by which the same characteristics are transmitted to the descendants which were derived from the ancestry of the various races. It is accordant with this very physiology, that men should be the partners of Adam's corruption—a procedure at the same time, which, however sustained by analogy, is in itself as inexplicable as that they should be made the partners of Adam's guilt. There may be a mysteriousness in all this which we cannot penetrate—yet, in respect of jurisprudence, not a deeper mysteriousness than that we should be made partners with Christ in His righteousness—a dispensation this in which it is the part of man most gladly and gratefully to rejoice; and instead of sending forth the outcries of an injured creature, to wait in humble and confiding expectancy for that day of light and enlargement when the mystery of God shall be finished, and we shall know even as we are known.

11. And Scripture, as well as nature, abounds with analogies of the same sort, as may be gathered both from its didactic and its historical passages. In the second commandment, it is declared by God as one of the methods of His administration, that He visits the iniquities of the fathers upon their children. And however difficult for us to comprehend the principle of this, we have repeated exemplifications of it in the Bible history. It was thus that the Amalekites were dealt with in the days of Saul, who was charged by the prophet Samuel with an exterminating commission against them—and this because of what Amalek had done to Israel centuries before, when they came up from Egypt (1 Sam. xv. 2, 3). It was thus, too, that the sons of Saul were hanged up before the Lord—and this not because of their own deed, but the deed of their father, in that he slew the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1-9). We further read of the Ammonites and the Moabites being excluded from the congregation of the Lord, because their ancestors had, ages before, refused accommodation to the children of Israel on their journey to Canaan, and devised mischievously against them. And on this account were the Israelites enjoined by their great legislator, not to seek the peace or prosperity of these two nations all their days for ever (Deut. xxiii. 3-6). Perhaps the most striking example of this peculiar jurisprudence in the Divine government is that of Manasseh, who personally repented of his enormous and daring impieties, and because of this repentance, was taken personally into acceptance and favour with God; and yet, though the reign of his grandson, the good king Josiah, intervened, was vengeance taken upon the people of the land, because of the provocations wherewith this same Manasseh, it may have been half a century before, provoked him withal (2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13; 2 Kings xxiii. 26). And it is no obscure intimation of the same mysterious mode of dealing with the families and nations of the earth which occurs even after the ushering in of the Christian economy, and as propounded by the lips of our Saviour Himself, when foretelling the destruction of Jerusalem—a vengeance, it would appear, not merely on the individual guilt of those upon whom it was laid, but on the accumulated guilt of ages that had long passed by; and for which the men of that generation had to bear in their own persons the most dreadful calamities that had ever been inflicted on any nation. And our Saviour not only threatens His countrymen with the punishment of all the righteous blood

which had been shed upon the earth, but seems even to charge them with the guilt of what had been done by their remote ancestors, when, speaking of Zacharias, He says, "Whom ye slew between the temple and the altar" (Matt. xxiii. 34-36). We feel the vast theological importance of these passages in Scripture history. They do not unfold the reason, but they amply confirm the fact, that God does judicially reckon with men for the sins of their ancestors. The same principle whereby He identifies the whole species with their first progenitor, and makes them the sharers both of his guilt and of his punishment; this principle of identification appears also in the particular history, both of families and of tribes or nations. He deals with them in aggregates, or in the same way that a corporation is made responsible for deeds long gone by—though now there be not an individual member of the body who had any part in them. We may not understand the rationale of such a procedure on the part of our Almighty Governor; but what we know not now, we shall know hereafter. We shall not attempt a present vindication; but this does not prevent a present confidence that all is right, and that a time is coming for the glorious manifestation of it. Meanwhile, there is no room to complain of hardship, seeing that for all which we have suffered or lost in Adam, we now have in Christ an overpassing compensation. And the day is at hand when we shall have as little room or reason to complain of darkness—the day of the revelation of hidden things, when it will be found of this as of all the other ordinations of God, that righteousness as well as power has had to do with it—that this way of immediate imputation, deeply enigmatical and beyond all comprehension as it may appear to us, forms no exception to the glorious truth that all God's ways are in righteousness. The song of the redeemed in heaven will be as clearly intelligent as devoutly rapturous—that not only are the works of God great and marvellous, but that just and true are the ways of the King of saints.

12. And if in the light, and amid the revelations of heaven, the works of God are still to be spoken of as marvellous, let us not wonder that in this world below, while yet in the infancy of our experience and of our being, there is not only so much to marvel at, but so much that we cannot comprehend. Most assuredly we have no title to complain, no reason to quarrel with God, because Adam's guilt has been made our guilt—if in

counterpart to this dispensation, if alongside of it, as it were, we are made welcome to the privilege, and most earnestly invited to share in it, of Christ's righteousness being made our righteousness. We have already said that the latter of these two dispensations is, in point of jurisprudence, to the full as mysterious as the former of them; but it is interesting to observe, that though it does not dissipate, and scarcely even alleviates the mysteriousness, there is one property common to both, and which we do well to recognise, as being of a piece with God's dealings in other departments of creation, and as marking an analogy in His modes of procedure, both with the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of grace. We have just noticed how in the system of His administration each individual of a species or of a genus is made to partake in all the defects and all the excellencies which are characteristic of the tribe—descending by an invariable law of transmission from the parentage to the progeny of the same races. And the Bible makes known, that just as we share in the forfeitures and disabilities which Adam hath entailed on us because partakers of the same nature with Adam—so also, ere Christ did earn for us a reinstatement in the favour of God, and the right to an eternal inheritance of blessedness and glory, Christ had to partake of the same nature with us. We are bound to receive the informations of Scripture in regard to facts, though it should tell us nothing of the connexion between them; and we are equally bound to receive the informations of Scripture in regard to connexions, though it should tell us nothing of the reason or the principle of these. And it does affirm a connexion between the efficacy of Christ's atonement, and that atonement having been made by Him in the nature of a man. We may not be able to resolve the question, why it should be so; but enough to present an authoritative telling of the Bible that it actually is so. It became God, we read, to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings; and for that purpose He was made lower than the angels, to become capable of that death which He tasted for every man. And He was made partaker of flesh and blood, that through death He might destroy him who was the great adversary of the human race. And so He took not on Him the nature of angels, but the nature of man—seeing that it behoved Him both to suffer and to serve in our likeness, that He might be qualified for the functions of the priesthood, and make reconciliation for sin. The children of

humanity were all made to share both in the guilt and the corruption of him, who was at once the prototype and the progenitor of the human race; and ere we could share in the salvation of the gospel, the Author and the Finisher thereof had to be made of a woman, and become a sharer in the humanity of those for whom He made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. If we are one with Adam in the forfeiture which he incurred, because of the same nature with Adam, we might also be one with Christ in the recovery which He has effected, because He is of the same nature with us. We may not be able in the light of reason to say how this is, while we have the most perfect warrant in the light of Scripture to say that so this is. He bare the penalty of our sins; and we are dealt with as having exhausted, nay sustained that penalty in our own person. He earned for us the rewards of eternity; and we are dealt with as having earned these rewards by our own services. For the achievement of these ends, there is a relationship with Christ into which we must enter—an union with Christ shadowed forth by the union of the dependent branches with the vine from which they derive all their life and all their fruitfulness—a close and abiding intimacy, of which Paul himself affirms the mysteriousness—likening the alliance between Christ and His Church to the alliance between the husband and his wife, or to the alliance between the elder brother and the rest of his family. He is not ashamed to call us brethren. There is thus a oneness, an identity, a participation of the same fortunes and the same state by those who are partakers of the same nature—alike observable under the economy of grace as under the economy of nature. There is a whole host of analogies to this style of procedure, on the field both of nature and of history. The methods of grace are, in this respect, akin to the methods of providence. We can fully comprehend the rationale of neither; but this is no cause why we should not practically avail ourselves of both, and more especially in the higher department for the sake of its higher and more enduring benefits—that in virtue of our brotherhood with Christ, we might become the children of God. And the step by which we enter on this relation is distinctly made known to us—"To as many as received Christ, to them gives he power to become the children of God, even to them who believe in his name." And again, "We are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." It is thus that we become

one in Him. It is surely not for us to profess our thorough comprehension of these things, when even an inspired apostle affirms them to be mysterious. Meanwhile, let us rejoice, amid all that we have suffered from being one with Adam, in the privileges and preferments that we are offered through being one with Christ. A day of enlargement is coming, when the mystery of God shall be finished, and in His light we shall clearly see light.

13. We prefer this mode of viewing the doctrine of immediate imputation—that is, to make use of a very common phrase in the argumentations of our science, not as contrary to reason but as above reason. We hold that many have addressed themselves to the treatment of this doctrine with too much of the air of demonstration, or as if they had in full possession a thorough mastery over its springs and principles. Now, we hold that in our present state these are hidden from our view; and we have no desire to push our inquisition among them further than the informations of Scripture might enable us—satisfied in this, as in every other department of theology, to be wise up to that which is written, without vainly aspiring after the wisdom that is beyond it. In as far as the Bible tells us that God entered into a covenant-relation with Adam both for himself and for all his posterity—in so far it is not our duty only, but our best wisdom, nay, the dictate of our soundest reason, to acquiesce. But do not, on that account, let us so speak of Adam being our federal head, as if we had thorough insight into the whole of that Divine ordination, by which we have become partakers in the guilt, even as we have become partakers in the corruption that issued from the Fall. We have no doubt, on the authority of revelation, that we inherit a guilt in Adam as the immediate, and not only as the mediate consequent of his act of disobedience in the garden of Eden; but we are disposed to view this as chiefly, if not altogether, a matter of revelation; nor can all the plausible illustrations, or rather often the confident reasonings, whether plausible or not, of my brethren in theology, lead me to be so far carried away by their example, as to think that nothing dark, nothing mysterious, has been left to lie on this part of the counsels of God. We feel in the contemplation of this, as of many other passages in the economy of the Divine government, that there is ample room for the pious reflection of the psalmist —"Thy judgments, O Lord, are a great deep;" nor can we in the least sympathize with the certainty, and often the intolerance, wherewith certain theologians would press their de-

monstrations on the acceptance of the Christian world. We do not mean their scriptural, but their merely argumentative demonstrations—as if they could vindicate this procedure of the Almighty Governor on the principles of their own natural jurisprudence. They speak, and authoritatively, as if their reason had an entire mastery over this subject—nay, and strangely enough, seem to feel as if they were pushing a triumph for orthodoxy, when they insist for our acceptance of it on the ground that we see it to be reasonable. We have no doubt that all orthodoxy is reasonable; but it follows not that this reasonableness should on all occasions be seen by us. We accept of its doctrines, not because we apprehend their reasonableness, but because they have been authoritatively made known to us by God; and to require our discernment of their reasonableness ere they can be so accepted, is in fact to invest reason with a mastery over revelation, instead of investing revelation with that mastery over reason, which, as our teacher and our informer, of right belongs to her. We are quite willing to admit that ere any statement of a professed revelation can be admitted into our creed, it should be such a statement as reason is not able to contradict; but we are not willing to admit that it should be such a principle as reason must, on some separate light or principle of its own, be able to recognise. Now, such precisely we hold the position to be of that doctrine which now engages us—we mean the doctrine of immediate imputation. We cannot, in the face of so many analogies, and of such weighty credentials as those of the Jewish and Christian revelations, we cannot gainsay it on the ground of its alleged inconsistency with the justice of God; but neither can we discern the consistency thereof with this Divine attribute. We are very sure of the consistency itself, but not because of any independent conception thereof by us in the light of our own understanding—we receive it on the ground alone of what we hold to be a well-established and well-accredited revelation. We believe it because God has said it; and this we hold to be a higher homage to His authority and truth, a truer exhibition of genuine and right orthodoxy, than is rendered by certain ultra-theologians, who would exact something more from us than an acknowledgment of the doctrine as true because we see it in the light of Scripture; and would have us further to say of it, that we see it to be a just and a reasonable doctrine in the light of our own moral perceptions. Just and

reasonable we hold it undoubtedly to be, but this only on the ground of its being within the four corners of the Bible; and just and reasonable we believe it will appear to our moral perceptions at length, amid the ulterior disclosures and the more comprehensive views of a future world. Meanwhile, we are satisfied to wait these coming manifestations; and more than satisfied, when, along with the mystery of that imputed guilt under which we are born, there is placed within our reach the counterpart mystery of that imputed righteousness in the acceptance of which we are born again. As a question of jurisprudence, the one mystery is as profoundly inscrutable as the other; and yet I cannot but perceive of this lofty and inaccessible God, that, shrouded though He be in the darkness of those counsels which are now impenetrable, He offers Himself to me in the gospel of His Son as a God of love. I therein distinctly behold Him to be not willing that I should perish in Adam, but most abundantly willing that I should be saved in Christ. In the way of ruin by the one, as in the way of escape by the other, there are the footsteps of a process which is to me inexplicable; but what we know not now, we shall know hereafter—and, meanwhile, there is a harmony of ordination in the revealed methods both of man's ruin and of his recovery, which might help our understanding of the economy under which we sit, and by the grace of the enlightening Spirit, shut us up unto the faith.

14. We should gladly relinquish all our merely speculative, and turn us to the practical views of this subject. For, reason as we may, there are mysteries, unresolvable mysteries, which we cannot escape, and which force themselves even upon the eye of observation in connexion with this theme. We cannot, though we would, shut out of view the fact, the palpable fact, of man's universal corruption; or of a whole species brought into the world, and without their own consent, in a state of moral distemper, and in virtue of which there is none who does not fall short of what even to the eye of conscience and in the light of nature, is the rule of righteousness. Here there is a deep enigma, of which we can as little give an explanation as of the origin of evil; and an enigma, too, not lying in a doctrine revealed to us from heaven, but in a phenomenon of which our senses can take daily and familiar cognizance upon earth. It is patent to all men, that on one and all there lies the weight of a most calamitous infliction—for what can be

more so than the moral necessity of sinning? It may well be looked to in the light of a punishment, for in truth it is the most grievous of all; but when once thus regarded, it can scarcely be looked upon as any aggravation of the difficulty, when told that we are laid under this punishment because we lie under guilt—a guilt coeval therefore with, or rather antecedent to our birth, because a guilt coming before the punishment that all who are shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin may be said to have borne from their infancy. In other words, it is quite palpable, we gather it from the face of nature and history, that with the commencement of our being we are treated as criminals; and this is quite as inexplicable as when it stands associated with what we gather from the face of Scripture—even that we are treated as criminals, because we are held as criminals, and so held from infancy: or rather, if we speak according to the order of cause and effect, or the natural precedency of guilt to punishment, have we been so held anterior to infancy; or to express it differently, we bring a guilt with us into the world, and as one of the direct consequences thereof, we bring a corruption with us into the world also. The consequent, that is, the corruption, is altogether obvious. It is a thing of ocular demonstration; and we stand in no need of a messenger from heaven to inform us of it. But a messenger from heaven has appeared, and informed us of the cause—even that the corruption of Adam has been entailed on us, just because the guilt of Adam has been imputed to us. If we demur to the revelation, because it tells us of a jurisprudence on the part of God that is to us inexplicable, we should recollect that experience tells us of an actual proceeding in the administration of God that is alike inexplicable. A great moral penalty has been laid upon us all from the womb, in virtue of which we come forth in a state of corruption. Experience tells us that we are treated as criminals; and the Bible tells us, with its doctrine of imputation, that we are held as criminals. Would it have been any alleviation of the mystery had the Bible told us nothing at all of this?—and so, instead of being made to understand that we are treated as criminals because held as criminals, we had been left at liberty to conceive that we had been treated as criminals though held as innocent. Between the doctrine of imputation and the denial of this doctrine, there is but a choice of difficulties; and in the findings of experience we have the same hard and insuperable

obscurities to deal with that we meet in the statements of Scripture. We have not attempted, because we are not able for it, any absolute vindication of either. But that is no reason why we should refuse for this part of theology the benefits which have accrued to the whole of theology from the analogical reasoning of Butler. The averments of Scripture are not to be set aside any more than the undoubted phenomena of nature, because we cannot assign the place or the principle which belongs to them in the rationale of the Divine government. Experience and the Bible are both of them competent informers of many a thing, that so it is—an information which is perfect and unviolated by any difficulty of ours, as to how it is. Each can tell us of the *what* in many things, without telling us of the *wherefore;* and thus may we have an absolute certainty of the *quid*, while profoundly and hopelessly in the dark as to the *quomodo*.

15. But these analogies do not stop here. Not only may it reconcile us to certain statements of the Bible, when we are told that they are not more mysterious than the findings of experience—it might smooth our way to the reception of one scriptural doctrine, which viewed by itself might seem to be of a dark and revolting character, when we are told of its analogy to another scriptural doctrine, alike dark, though not alike revolting to our apprehensions and our fears. We might quarrel with the imputation of Adam's guilt to us, when we do not so quarrel with the imputation of our guilt to the great Redeemer of men, or with the imputation to us of His righteousness; for there is an element in the latter which does not belong to the former imputation. Christ was willing to suffer as well as to serve for the guilty sons of men. The sons of men neither sinned with their great progenitor, nor was it with their own consent that the guilt of his sin was laid upon them. In this respect there is an undoubted dissimilarity between the two cases. It is only in respect of their jurisprudence that they admit of being compared; and we must say, that whether it be the transference of merits earned by one party to others who had no share in them, or the transference of demerits incurred by one party to others who had no share in them, there is a difficulty in both which is alike insoluble. When we look to either as a question of law or justice on the part of God, we can only say that God's ways are not as man's ways, that His thoughts are not as man's thoughts. And then

as to the hardship complained of by men in that ordination by which they have been made guilty of another's sin, and without their consent—we may not be able to meet this complaint, so as to vindicate the dealings of God with that large proportion of mankind who never heard of the Saviour; but if we would only restrain our speculations, as becomes us, on the policy of God's universal government, we are surely on triumphant vantage-ground for silencing the murmurs of aggrieved nature, when sent forth in the form of an outcry against the severity of God upon ourselves. If, on the one hand, the guilt of Adam has been reckoned to us, is there nothing to neutralize this infliction, or to appease our remonstrances because of it, in that the righteousness of Christ is offered to us? When the apostle tells us of what we have lost in the first Adam, he at the same time tells us, not only of what we have recovered, but of the how much more we have gained in the second Adam. To us, at least, the gift overpasses the forfeiture. We leave with all confidence to the disposal of our almighty Sovereign all the men of those nations among whom the light of the gospel has never entered. But surely *we* have nothing to allege of outrage or injury, when the light of that gospel is shining around us; and when in its friendly overtures, pressed without reserve, and with the utmost earnestness upon us all, we might for all the miseries obtain, if we will, a greatly overpassing compensation.

16. And herein lies the theological importance of our doctrine. The rejection of it, because of its mysteriousness, would, in scientific consistency, involve the rejection of another doctrine, which lies at the foundation of the evangelical system, and which constitutes the basis of a sinner's religion and a sinner's hopes. On personal grounds, indeed, the one imputation may be a more welcome proposition than the other—the imputation of Christ's righteousness a more welcome announcement than the imputation of Adam's guilt; but on the purely intellectual ground, if there be a difficulty in the latter which disposes us to stand in doubt of it, this cannot well take place without a lurking distrust of the former also. The same consideration which serves to dilute or darken to the eye of the mind the first of these articles, must soil the transparency of that medium through which we obtain a clear perception or confident belief in the second of them. It is true that our self-love might induce us to like the one imputation better

than the other—just as we like a gain rather than a loss, a benefit rather than an injury; but, by the constitution of the gospel, our participation of the benefit is made to hinge, not on our liking for the doctrine which proclaims it, but on our faith in that doctrine. It is not enough that it be palatable to the feelings of the mind, as a matter of taste or a matter of choice —it must be palpable to the discernment of the mind as a matter of understanding. It must not only be relished, but understood and believed in. It is not sufficient that it be prized or longed after for its value, it must further commend itself to the faculty which takes cognizance of its truth; and if the juridical difficulty which attaches to the transference of Adam's guilt shall be permitted to weigh against the evidence of Scripture, the same difficulty attaches to the analogous transference of Christ's righteousness, and so will have a sullying effect on the great article of a sinner's justification in the sight of God. The sound Christian philosophy, which defers to the contents of Scripture because of the legitimate and well-earned authority which lies in the credentials of Scripture, will deal equally with all the averments of this sacred record, and in so doing, will mightily strengthen its faith in all. The harmony and the mutual support which obtain throughout the component parts of every system of truth, will not be found wanting in the system of that revelation which has come down to us from heaven; and more especially, the man who believes that we are held as having sinned in Adam, because the Bible tells him so it is, though it has not told him how it is, will be made to rejoice in the clearness and the consistency of his views, and to experience of this dogma, hateful and revolting though it be to many, that it serves him for a confirmation or a buttress to the most essential article of the truth as it is in Jesus.

17. What we have already said of the theological importance of this article will in part demonstrate its great practical importance also. We think that the doctrine of our guilt in Adam might prove helpful, perhaps in commencing, and certainly in confirming, our faith in the all-precious doctrine of our righteousness in Christ. If there be an inscrutable policy which we cannot fathom in that procedure of the Divine administration by which we are condemned because of Adam's sin, there may be a like inscrutable policy in that other procedure of the Divine administration by which we are justified because of Christ's meritorious services; but certain it is, that after

having admitted the one on the authority of Scripture, there is something more than an equal reason for admitting the other also; for, over and above the authority of Scripture, which is the same for both, there is an *argumentum a fortiori* in behalf of the imputed righteousness which is peculiarly its own. Viewed as a question of legal judgment, we may be as little disposed to assign a principle for the one as for the other. But we read of a mercy that rejoiceth against judgment—we read of judgment as a strange work, and of mercy as a darling attribute—we read of a mercy that rejoiceth over all the works of God, and in the midst of all His perfections; and as Paul, when comparing our loss by Adam with our gain by Christ, tells us how much the one preponderates over the other, so we feel disposed to reiterate and take up his inference; and to conclude from our very experience of the evils which follow in the train of the imputed guilt, with what perfect assurance we might rely on that imputed righteousness, in the train of which there follow the forgiveness, and the reconciliation, and the graces of the Holy Spirit, and the everlasting happiness, and all the other blessings which a gracious Dispenser delights in shedding forth among the children of men. Surely, if by an economy which God himself hath instituted, the one imputation have taken such baleful effect in all the miseries of our natural inheritance, how much more will the other imputation, which He also hath ordained, take effect in all the fruits and fulfilments of His promised salvation? He surely, of whom we read that He is love, and that He is the Lord God merciful and gracious, yet left open a mysterious pathway by which the guilt of Adam, and the penalties of that guilt, descend upon all who sprung from him—He, doubtless, will give full facility and accomplishment along that other pathway which Himself hath ordained, and given advertisement of to the world; and by which the righteousness of Christ, and the rewards of that righteousness, descend in showers of blessedness and glory on all who believe in Him. The bane and the antidote may to us be alike mysterious, and there may be reasons of state for the operation both of the one and of the other which we are unable to comprehend; but if there be a certainty, as well as gloriousness, in the ministration of condemnation, then might we reckon and rejoice in the equal certainty and superior gloriousness of the ministration of righteousness with the full assurance of faith.

18. There is another theological and practical benefit in the

doctrine of immediate imputation, which might best be understood if we attend to the counterpart evil which results from the doctrine of mediate imputation. If all the guilt we inherit from Adam be the guilt of those sins which ourselves commit in virtue of the corruption derived from Adam, then, to maintain the parallelism announced in Scripture between the first and the second Adam, between the methods of our ruin and of our recovery, all the righteousness, of which we are made the heirs and the partakers in Christ, must be the righteousness of that new obedience we are enabled to perform, in virtue of the holy and the renovated nature derived from Christ. Now, we venture to affirm, that there is no earnest, no enlightened, no honestly and uprightly aspiring Christian, who does not feel the utter frailty and precariousness of such a foundation on which to rest for acceptance with God. The farther that one advances in the experimental life of a believer, the deeper and the humbler will be his sense of the insufficiency of his own personal righteousness—we mean of that righteousness which is done by himself through the operation of that Spirit, which is given as the earnest of their inheritance to them who have before trusted in Christ. If at conversion they renounced all trust in their own righteousness, and made the righteousness of Christ the alone plea of their meritorious acceptance, then after conversion they make as little a plea of their own righteousness, and rest this as entirely and exclusively on the righteousness of Christ as before. What was the beginning of their confidence at the first, they hold firm and fast even unto the end. They lean always on the same foundation, the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever. There is nothing in the subsequent experience of the new life on which they have entered that can lead them to change it, or to transfer their dependence from the merits of Christ to their own merits, as the basis, the legal and judicial basis, of their right to the inheritance of the saints. The whole experience of them who grow in grace, and at the same time in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, is on the side of a more simple and entire dependence on Him who is the Lord their righteousness, than before. With every accession to their growth in grace, is there an accession to their moral sensibility, so as to make them more alive every day to the remainder of corruption in a sinful nature, now placed under the control of a heaven-born principle within them, but not yet exterminated. It is thus that the humility and the

positive excellence of every genuine Christian keep pace the one with the other—so that as days and years roll on, we find him clinging more tenaciously and more exclusively to Christ than ever, and to the everlasting righteousness which He hath brought in. The world cannot enter into the felt distress and mortification of the believer under the consciousness of his own personal deficiencies. Nevertheless, it is but the repetition of what was felt and uttered by the apostle Paul, who not only at conversion renounced his own righteousness, which was of the law, but after conversion never ceased to deplore his infirmities, and to make mention of his vile body, that body of sin and death which encompassed him; and whose only outgoing from the fears and agonies of that remorse which agitated his bosom, was that he could still thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Now this doctrine of a mediate imputation, if carried out as consistently as it ought to be, serves to dilute and to vitiate, and thus to destroy, the confidence of the believer—placing it on another foundation than at the first, on the yet immature and wofully imperfect righteousness of the new creature, and not where it ever should abide, on that perfect and immaculate righteousness which is without failure and without a flaw. Thus it behoves to be a faltering, or, if not, it will be a false confidence, and resting on a plea of merit under the righteousness of the law—even of that law which Christ, and He alone, hath magnified and made honourable. There must be a singleness as well as strength of faith, ere it can be that which availeth; or, in other words, it must be a faith resting directly on the righteousness of Christ as our alone right to heaven, and without the least admixture of the feebler and baser ingredients of man's righteousness—even though of man now under process of regeneration, as being a new creature in Jesus Christ our Lord. Such a composition of different materials in the framework, thus to speak, of our faith, will infallibly weaken, and bring it to shipwreck at last. We are greatly mistaken if it be not the man who can most readily acquiesce in the statement and on the authority of Scripture, that the guilt of Adam is his guilt—if it be not he who is best prepared for laying confident hold on the righteousness of Christ as his righteousness. This integrity of belief, this harmony between its various parts, is fitted to confirm, and, as it were, to consolidate the whole. If, in the derivation of his guilt from Adam, he can find a separate place for the immediate as well

as the mediate imputation, he will have all the less difficulty in separating the immediate from the mediate in the derivation of a righteousness from Christ—the righteousness of Christ's own obedience made ours for justification, from the righteousness of man's obedience performed on the strength of a grace given to him, and which constitutes the all in all of his sanctification. We feel that it is not in the power of argument, and that it is for his experience alone to appreciate how mightily it conduces to the peace of a believer, when thus led rightly to divide the word of truth, so as to distinguish between the things which differ, and to be settled on the righteousness of Christ as the only foundation on which he rests, not as the preparation of a personal, but as the plea of a legal meetness for the rewards of eternity. If it be through the grace of the Spirit that he is made meet in person and character, it is through the righteousness of Christ, made his by faith, that he becomes meet in law for a share in that inheritance which Christ hath purchased for all who believe on Him.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE RECIPROCAL AND CONJUNCT INFLUENCES WHICH THE LIGHT OF NATURE AND THE LIGHT OF REVELATION HAVE UPON EACH OTHER.

1. One of the principles on which we selected the moral state of man as our initial topic, when entering on the subject-matter of Christianity, was that it presented a subject which both the light of nature and the light of revelation shone upon —a common ground which lay within the domain of the Christian theology, but was not wholly without the domain of the natural theology either. What the Scripture tells of the sins, and the sinfulness and the guilt of man, is accorded with to a very large extent by man's own conscience. What the Bible says we are, we find ourselves to be. The Word of God is said to be a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and, when telling us of these, it may be said to make them manifest. But what is more than barely making them manifest is, that it makes them manifest to ourselves. But this may not fully express the difference which we mean to convey. When the Bible makes affirmation of human depravity, we have something more

than the telling of the Bible for it—we have the finding of the man's own conscience, which gives its consent as it were, and closes with the information that the Bible lays before him. What the Scripture says to be true, he sees to be true—manifest not only in the Scripture, but manifest also upon his own heart. The same truth which radiates upon him from Scripture, is also reflected to him from his own bosom. He views the same thing as if graven upon two tablets—the tablet of an outward revelation, and the tablet also of his own character. As we have heard, said the Israelites of old, so have we seen in the city of our God. As we read, may the Christian now say, in the pages of God's word, so we feel to be in ourselves. What is spoken from the Scripture is also spoken to the heart. The same conviction may perhaps have arisen in the mind of a reader, on the naked assertion of the Scripture alone, and because of the deference which he yielded to its authority—but not the same force of conviction, as when the depositions of Scripture and the depositions of the human conscience go hand in hand.

2. But some further consideration is necessary ere we can have a thorough understanding of the manner in which this agreement between the conscience and the Bible is brought about. It is not necessary for this purpose that the conscience should have been aware on the moment beforehand of what the Bible was going to tell—so as to meet this telling with a recognition that was already full in my mind, and that immediately previous to the statements which the Bible sets before me. It is not as if I were hearing to-day the narrative of a something which took place yesterday, at which I myself was present, and of which I kept an entire recollection—in which case my own consciousness could vouch for the truth of the report to which I was now listening. It is more as if I was hearing to-day the narrative of a something which took place on some far distant day of my past history, and which had altogether vanished from my thoughts. There are many events of this sort, so far lost and forgotten, that memory, if left to itself, never would recall them; and yet when told of it by another, it would come, not in the shape of a new information, but in the shape of an old recollection, awoke from its slumbers by a voice *ab extra*—and now when awake, witnessing for the truth of the utterance on a distinct and independent knowledge of its own. Nothing can be more frequent or familiar than the mental phenomenon to which I am now adverting. There are many thousand occur-

rences of my life, now lying in deep oblivion, and never, in this world at least, to be brought forth of the dormitory where they now lull in profoundest repose, and which yet start into consciousness, as if awakened by a knocking at the gate, on a simple utterance from without. They are not in my remembrance, and yet with the most perfect readiness and ease could be brought to my remembrance. They are not the objects of my *previous* recognition, and yet on the moment when I am told of them, they reappear on the field of memory, and become the objects of my *present* recognition. They had long vanished from my own retrospect of my own history; or at least lain buried and out of sight on the field of recollection behind me. But there is nothing more certain, for it is what we experience every day, than that by a resurrection as with the power of magic, the word of an acquaintance, like that of a conjuror, can bring them to life again. We had lost, and if left alone had lost irrecoverably, all sense and knowledge of the things which he brings to our ears; but on the moment of their being so brought, this sense and knowledge are revived. I may have believed because he told me, and I had faith in his integrity; but I further believe on the evidence of a consciousness which he himself had awakened. I have now two witnesses instead of one, whereas before he spoke I had neither the one witness nor the other—not the external witness, because he had not yet given his testimony; and not the internal, because profoundly asleep till the voice of my informer had awakened it. He, in fact, both gives his own evidence and calls forth the evidence of another. He not only furnishes me with the argument of his own trustworthiness for the truth of his narrative, but he has made that argument manifest to my consciousness.

3. Now what is true of the memory is also true of the conscience. If the one can be awakened by a voice *ab extra*, so also can the other. In regard to the former of these faculties, we all know that what has not been kept in remembrance may yet be called to remembrance; and so there is not a more familiar saying by one man to another, who may have forgotten something, than—I will bring it to your recollection. Now this holds true also of the other of these faculties. Conscience may have lost its sense of the enormity of a transgression, the evil of which and the guilt of which it would have aforetime shuddered at. And yet this decayed, this extinct sensibility of conscience, may be revived by a voice from without—it may be

relumed as it were, rekindled by the testimony of other men. Often in a course of vicious indulgence the conscience of a man may sink into a state of hebetude: and the voice of remonstrance from within, powerful it may be at the outset of a profligate and unprincipled career, may have wholly died away—and more especially if the evil was prosecuted in secret, so as to be free of all disturbance from the glances or the reproaches of other men. And yet when the infamy breaks out, and the face of society is turned, whether in a leer of universal contempt, or with the expression of a severe indignancy on the unhappy culprit, we mistake it if we think that it is only a sense of disgrace which overwhelms him. To the agony of shame because of his delinquencies now unveiled to public observation, there is superadded the agony of remorse now astir within the precincts of his own bosom—as if awakened from its sleep by the touch of a felt sympathy with the moral judgments of other men. This is a deeply interesting phenomenon, and it might well lead us to anticipate—nay, teach in some measure to comprehend the results of that day, when the judgment from on high will be set, and the books shall be opened. If the reflex and secondary judgment of our fellow-mortals can thus lay us prostrate under an overwhelming sense of sin and of shame, what must be the effect when a countenance of rebuke is turned against us from God himself; and by a light struck out, as it were, between the book of His remembrance and the book of our own consciences, there is superadded to the shame and the everlasting contempt from without, a sensibility from within, at present dormant though not extinct, but, then in full operation, which will so goad and agonize us, as if by the whip of a secret tormentor, that we shall be made to feel in its dreadful experience what is meant by the worm that dieth not—what is meant by the fire that is not quenched.

4. This will prepare you to understand how it is, that when, instead of a particular fact in our past history, long forgotten but recalled to memory by the voice of an informer, or rather of a reminder from without—or, instead of a particular vice long indulged in, and without any check from an opposing conscience long dead to the sense of its enormity, but now seen to be morally vile and hateful through the operation of a pronounced judgment made to bear down upon it from the lips and the eyes of other men—how, when instead of this a general charge is preferred, or a general characteristic alleged, not perhaps against

me especially, but against humanity at large—how it is that my own consciousness and my own conscience may respond to it, and may constrain me to acknowledge that verily the book, whether as read by ourselves or as expounded by the preacher, which thus tells us, is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and that verily God is in it of a truth. There is one very general charge of this sort brought against not ourselves only but the whole species; and this very much one and the same charge, though under different names—as ungodliness, and earthliness, and carnality, and our being lovers of the creature more than of the Creator. Now when this is brought home to our convictions, it is not merely because of the authority of the book as an informer of what we are, but because made to feel that so we are through the avenues both of consciousness and of conscience—both of our own memory and our own moral sense. And as if to meet the peculiarities of each man, and so gain over the convictions of all, this charge is preferred against us in innumerable forms, and couched in a variety of expressions adapted to the various habitudes and experiences of men :— "There is none that seeketh after God;" "there is none that understandeth God:" "God is not in all his thoughts;" "living without God in the world;" "turning every man to his own way." These, and countless others, if urged with faithfulness and skill, might tell, some on one conscience and some on another, and so as to convince all of their moral and spiritual nakedness, and of their utter unmeetness as they are for acceptance with God, from whom in fact they are the willing outcasts. Both consciousness and conscience will join in giving consent and efficacy to this demonstration—the one, if awakened, can tell how truly it is that pleasure, or business, or the urgencies of their daily occupation, all tend to exclude God from their habitual regards, and so as to divest Him of any practical ascendency over their desires or their doings all the day long. And the other, if awakened, can tell of the enormity of such a habit—the habit of walking in the counsel of their own hearts, and after the sight of their own eyes—without reference to Him who gives us every breath, and ekes out to us every moment of our being. Such reflections might never have been called forth from within, but for the radiance made to bear upon us from without, but for the entrance of those words which give light unto the simple, and the light of the knowledge of their disease and danger to those who before were unconscious of

both—because alike ignorant of themselves and inadvertent to the law of God. It is thus that consciousness and conscience, which, on the question of our guilt in the sight of God, had lain as two sleeping witnesses within the breast, might be awakened by the voice of the preacher: and hence the importance of those sermons which treat powerfully and well both of human life and of the divine law—which delineate with truthfulness and effect not the outward history only but the inward character of man, and which at the same time make vivid demonstration both of the commandments and the high claims of God upon his obedience. It is thus that the law is made a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ. Men are brought to know themselves sinners, and reduced to the question—what shall they do to be saved?

5. And let it not be thought that the operation, as we have now explained it, supersedes the work of the Spirit. He throughout, and from first to last, may be all in all. All which is required to preserve His supremacy over this great process—the process of translation out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, is to understand of Him, that when He convinces of sin, He acts upon man as man; and instead of lifting an articulate voice, or shining upon him by a direct vision, He causes him both to know and to feel the truth through the medium of his own faculties. It is not the Spirit which tells him of the law of God, it is the Bible which tells him; but then the Spirit opens his eyes to behold the wondrous things contained in this Bible, which is the book of God's law. Neither is it the Spirit which bids him consent to and acknowledge this law as holy, just, and good—he is so bidden by his own conscience; but then it is the Spirit who enlightens the conscience, and awakens it to a sense which it never before had of what the creature owes to the Creator. And in like manner, it is not the Spirit who charges him with his manifold delinquencies, and in particular with the great master-sin of his ungodliness,—still it is the Bible which thus charges him; but the Spirit opens his understanding to understand this Bible, and thus clearly to perceive what the articles are of the indictment there drawn out against him. And lastly, it is not the Spirit who proximately or immediately responds to the truth of these charges,—his own consciousness responds to it; but still it is the Spirit who has opened this eye of the inner man, so as to discern the lineaments which are graven on the tablet of one's own

character. In a word, the Spirit reveals or makes palpable what is graven on both tablets—that of the outward revelation, and that of our own hearts; and does not overbear but gives effect to that law, by which the voice from without calls forth the testimony of a consenting voice from within; and the evidence is thereby elicited, which gives rise to what the Bible speaks of, as the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience. And over and above this, the Spirit gives, not the requisite intelligence alone, but the requisite sensibility for an humble, sorrowing, conscience-stricken penitent, who, under the agitations of remorse and fear, feels that in himself he is undone, and seeks the way to salvation,—still this is effected, not immediately but mediately, through the operation of the Spirit on the human faculties, who taketh away from us the heart of stone, and gives a heart of flesh in its stead. He sets up the new creature within us; but a creature as variously gifted as ever the old creature was with intellect and memory, and all those powers of apprehension or capacities of emotion which a true mental philosophy would assign to the constitution of human nature. And we are not to imagine but that in this work of conviction, or even of conversion, the whole is proceeded with in the order, and according to the working of the human faculties. So that while admitting the entire mastery of the Spirit over the whole operation, I should not recoil from a phrase which I believe has been sometimes made use of—the philosophy of conversion. It is true, that the Spirit bloweth where He listeth. We cannot tell who the individual is that He is to light upon; nor can we assign the reason, why in the new creation, or under the economy of grace, one man is left in spiritual blindness, while another is made wise unto salvation; but neither can we tell why in the economy of nature one man is gifted with highest genius, while another is left on the humble platform of average and every-day intellect, or even sunk far beneath it into helpless idiotism. Still this does not hinder but that there is a philosophy of the human mind, competent to go a certain way, both in laying down the map, and in assigning the order and the laws and the working of the human faculties. And in like manner, though we know not whence the Spirit cometh, nor yet whither or to what man He goeth—still I do not understand that in operating on that man He suspends or traverses any of the principles of our nature. The machinery of the inner man proceeds with its various evolutions in the order of cause and effect

just as before. The man reads his Bible, and reads it with attention, although it be the Spirit of God who hath opened his heart, as He did that of Lydia, to attend to the things which are spoken there. And as the fruit of this his earnest heed, the meaning of the book may at length dawn upon him, though it be in virtue of a light from on high which shone on a dark place, and caused the day to dawn and the day-star to arise in his heart. And the lesson thence given forth of his own sinfulness may be carried home to his bosom, and be re-echoed there—although it was the God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, that shone within the chambers of his soul, and so effected the manifestation of the truth unto his conscience. There is thus a series of steps, a succession of mental exercises, which lead proximately and instrumentally to a mental state—even the state of the conviction of sin; and yet it is the office of the Spirit to convince of sin. When He comes, says the Saviour, He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. We hope that you see the consistency of these things. The Spirit of God has absolute control over the mechanism of the spirit of man; and yet, without disturbance to the operations or the laws of that mechanism—without violence done to any of its principles or any of its powers, He does not traverse the sequences or principles of the mental philosophy—He stimulates and gives a right direction to them. The attention, and the judgment, and the belief consequent on evidence, and the action of the intellectual on the active powers, of the decisions of the understanding on the sensibilities of the heart, or dictates of the conscience, or purposes of the will—all these under the guidance and by the force of the regenerative influence from on high, are put into busy play and exercise, but so as to present us with the spectacle of a reading, and a reasoning, and a resolving, and withal a rightly thinking and rightly acting man—whose Bible tells upon his conscience, and whose conscience, awakened by the light or the voice from without, gives back its testimony to the Bible—and this whether in convincing him of sin, or in converting him to the Saviour.

6. Now that instrumentality which the Spirit makes use of, we, the fellow-workers with God in the great business of the ministry of the gospel, ought also to make use of. He acts upon man according to the laws of his constitution, and so ought we. He addresses Himself to man's understanding and conscience and memory, and to the sensibilities of his heart, and

to these we should also address ourselves. In particular, we should make constant appliance of that Bible which is the great instrument whereby the Spirit works; and we should labour to find our way by it to human consciences, to the secret thoughts and intents of which it is that the Spirit pierces; but still it is by the word of the testimony as with a probing instrument in His hand, that He effects this penetration among the arcana of the inner man. It is by an action and reaction between these two elements, the Bible and the conscience, that the light is struck out which reveals Christianity to the soul. And the operation thus set in motion is of paramount efficacy in convincing of sin—that great initial lesson which lies at the basis of our faith, and by which what the Bible says he is, the sinner finds himself to be. The two work, as it were, to each other's hands. The announcements from without are re-echoed by a consenting testimony from within. And he who, on the one hand, is the most intelligent reader of the Bible, and on the other, is the most intelligent observer of human character and life—so as to be most skilled in the adaptations of the one to the other—he it is who not only is the best herald and expounder of the Bible, but the best qualified to carry the acceptance of men for this message of God to the world.

7. Let not the doctrine of the Spirit, then, supersede either your working by the Bible, or your working on the consciences of men. The truth is, that it should encourage the work—just as it is in the hope of rain from heaven that the operations of agriculture are carried forward in good heart, and with strenuous perseverance. And thus it is that the element of living water from on high should give both direction and diligence to the whole business of the ministry of the gospel. Both in the natural and the spiritual husbandry will it be found, that the provision from above quadrates with the operations which are carried on below. As it is only from the field which has been sown and occupied with seed, that even with the most timely and genial showers you can look for the fruits of harvest—so it is only from the soil of the human heart, when seasoned with the word of God and occupied by its truths, that even with the descent of grace from the upper sanctuary, we can look for the fruits of faith or the fruits of righteousness. Let not the preacher, then, because of this preternatural influence, intermit any of that tangible or natural work which he is called upon to perform. Let him not think in particular that the law which

we have endeavoured to explain, and by which it is that the testimonies of the Bible from without call up, as from a dormitory, the reminiscences and convictions which had lain asleep in the storehouses of memory and conscience within—let him not think that this law ceases to be available, now that the Spirit of God hath taken the whole work of conversion into His own hand. The work is wholly and altogether His; but it is not by setting aside this or any other law of the human constitution, that He makes good the fulfilment of it. He proceeds with man as man; and it is not by setting aside, and far less by destroying the machinery of his principles and powers that He accomplishes His work of a glorious renovation, but by working that machinery—insomuch that the subject on whom He operates remains as entire as a man, as regular and varied in all his processes as ever, after that he has become a new creature in Jesus Christ our Lord.

8. But there is a use, and that a most importantly practical use, to be made of this doctrine of the Spirit—not, most assuredly, to slacken our diligence in the vocation of the ministry, but to make us feel our dependence, and so to stimulate our devotions, as that the descent of this heavenly influence both upon ourselves and on our people, shall become the object of our incessant supplications and prayers. We know not a more instructive passage in the Bible than that in which we read of the co-ordinate rank given to preaching and prayer by the first teachers of Christianity—"We shall give ourselves wholly," say the apostles, "to prayer and to the ministry of the word." Thus should we exemplify the rare and precious combination of Christian wisdom with Christian piety—the habit of praying earnestly with the habit of working diligently—so as that we shall prove ourselves ever busy, and that to the uttermost, with the doings of the required service, while ever at the same time looking upward for that influence from on high, which can alone sustain our doings and impart to them all their efficacy. The conjunction of these two is the way to insure a prosperous Church and a prosperous ministry; for if either be apart from the other, we have no reason to expect that a blessing will descend upon us. Performance without prayer will be followed up by an impressive mockery on all our enterprises—prayer without performance will be alike ineffectual. Combine both, and the lights of philosophy and experience will be in unison with the light of faith. It is the distinction of these which

makes the state of religion in the world so puny, and stunted, and scanty a thing as we actually behold it. It is forgotten not only that God has a part in the prosperity and well-doing of the Church, but that man has a part also—and this latter without prejudice to the truth and orthodoxy of the doctrine that God is all in all. He not only works directly Himself; but He works through man, or in man, both to will and to do: and the effect of God's working in man, is to set man working—and this latter is the part which man has in the conjunct operation as a fellow-worker with the Most High. If he stir not up the gift which God hath bestowed on him, we have no reason to count upon him as a likely instrument, either for saving his own soul, or the souls of others. If it be true, that because God worketh in us both to will and to do, we should work out our own salvation with fear and with trembling—we should for the very same reason labour to work out the salvation of others with fear and trembling also. Paul laboured among his people in fear and weakness, and much trembling—but when he was weak, then was he strong; and never in the history of the Church was the union more gloriously manifested than by him, of the most incessant diligence with the most entire dependence. If he worked without ceasing, he also prayed without ceasing. The heart and the hand were alike true to their respective functions—the piety which glowed in the one, the performance which kept the other in constant and strenuous occupation. And it turned out, that as he was the most learned and laborious, so also was he the most eminently successful of all the apostles; and his example, like a light shining from afar, hath come down to succeeding generations. Let us ply then, with all duteousness, the instrumentality of that Bible which God hath put into our hands; and let us adapt it, with all intelligence, to the laws of that subject—human nature—on which we operate. For there is nothing in the agency or intervention of the Spirit to abrogate these laws—nothing to traverse or change the mechanism of our constitution, however essential His operation may be to repair and rectify the mechanism, in order both to set it agoing and to keep it agoing. Let us work then, as if man did all—let us pray as if God did all. Both are true in their respective senses, and most harmoniously true. Man is altogether subject to God—yet not in the way that an inanimate machine is subject to him. He must be addressed and acted on, according to the powers and the properties which belong to him as a man—his under-

standing, his conscience, his will, along with the various affections and sensibilities wherewith his Maker has endowed him. Let us suit our appliances to the subject on which we are operating—yet never cease to look up in devout supplication to Him who can alone give fulfilment and effect to the whole operation.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE PRACTICAL AND PULPIT TREATMENT OF THIS SUBJECT.

1. We know not a fitter theme than man's disobedience, along with his consequent guilt, for being urged on the conscience and the fears of an ordinary congregation—though it should be well understood by you, that, while in the dogmatic treatment of this whole subject, there are certain topics which require a most lengthened and laborious exposition, either from the professor's chair or in systems of Divinity—there are certain other topics which, for the great object of Christianizing men, or in the practical treatment of the same subject, suit best for the enforcements and appeals of the pulpit.

2. You are aware of the virtue annexed in the Bible itself to those convictions which are effected in the minds of men by the manifestation of the truth unto their consciences. Now what is thus manifested must be matter of present sense and feeling, and not a mere matter of past history. When told of what happened some thousands of years ago, my belief is carried through a different medium from what it is when told either of a something in my own personal history or in the actual state of my heart and character. In the one case I have faith in the narrative of an informer; in the other I have faith in the immediate depositions of my own memory, or my own consciousness. One can understand how the latter conviction should be of a far more intimate and affecting sort than the former, and should call forth the correspondence of a much closer and more powerful sympathy between the hearer and the preacher. We are not making this distinction for the purpose of laying an interdict on the subject of Adam's sin and its effects upon his posterity, as if these were useless or irrelevant matters for a sermon. We only say that they are not matters by which to impress or speak home to the consciences of men.

They belong to a far distant retrospect in the history of our species; and we are brought to the belief or knowledge of them by the testimony of credible histories and credible historians. It is a very different case when we hear from the pulpit of our own personal sins or personal sinfulness. This calls forth the witness in our own bosoms; and it is on the latter topics, and not on the former, that we command the advantage of manifesting the truth unto the consciences of our hearers.

3. But that one be convinced that he has aught like an adequate sense of his own demerits and his own deficiencies, he must have some notion of the standard of rectitude, or of that original righteousness, beneath which he has fallen. When we speak of original righteousness, we do not yet mean the righteousness in which Adam was created, but that high, original, and primitive rule of righteousness which is set forth in the law of God—whether as written on the heart or on the tablets of a revealed jurisprudence. We must admit that, as written on the heart of man, the characters had been greatly obscured, though never wholly obliterated. The publication of the gospel has done much to brighten and restore them, even among men who have not yet come under the power of the gospel, though greatly enlightened thereby. And so there is not a congregation in Christendom, to whom if you preach the law of God, there is not a certain amount of moral light that will give a consenting testimony to the truth of your demonstration. When you tell them what they ought to be and to do, there is that in them which goes along with the lesson, or which acknowledges the truth of principle that is in it. But more is necessary ere the conviction of sin can be worked in their minds. They must not only know what are the demands of the law, but they must know, or be sensible, of their own defects and shortcomings therefrom;—in other words, there must be both a conscience and a consciousness awakened; and whenever the law is clearly and vigorously preached, both are set in motion—both these faculties are brought into play; and the sinner, awakened by the sense of guilt, of his own enormous and inexpiable guilt, is often under this process reduced to the question, What shall I do to be saved? It is thus that the law acts the part of a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ; and therefore I would have you, under this head of divinity, and for its right pulpit management, as one of the most seasonable and effective of your lessons, to deal forcibly and frequently

with your hearers on the obligation and extent of the law of God. When the law came, says the apostle, sin revived, and I died; when made to know the spirituality and exceeding breadth of the commandment, I was made at the same time to feel my own exceeding deficiency therefrom, and so to feel myself under sentence of death, as being the rightful subject of its condemnation and its terrors.

4. And to make full use of the law, it is not enough that you give forth its demonstrations of guilt to the consciences of your hearers. There are certain minds, perhaps, of grosser temperaments, that are assailed with most powerful effect by its denunciations of vengeance. The apostle Jude evidently points to a distinction in the treatment of different classes when he says —"Of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire." The winning invitations of mercy tell most influentially on the former, while the latter need to be driven by the menaces of a judgment and fiery indignation. Such an appliance is warranted throughout the whole of Scripture by a number of examples beyond reckoning. "Knowing the terrors of the Lord," says Paul, "we persuade men." Men are warned to flee from the coming wrath; and to turn them, turn them, for why should they die? The conscience that is within a man, and which tells him of his innumerable delinquencies from the perfect law of rectitude and purity and godliness, puts you on a high vantage-ground for bearing down upon his fears as well as his convictions; and therefore it is, that when you tell their violations of the law, you should also tell of the law's dread and immutable sanctions, and how sin involves in it the doom of an angry God and an undone eternity.

5. But as it is through their convictions that you reach their fears, it is of importance that you so adapt your argument, and so press it home, as to make the sinfulness of men palpable to their consciences. Now there is a difference in regard to this among hearers, which requires a corresponding difference of treatment on the part of their spiritual teachers and guides. We press this all the more earnestly upon your attention, because, as we have already told you, there is a certain sweeping and unqualified style of assertion upon the subject, in which we think that many theologians have evinced a want both of discrimination and delicacy. We speak not merely of the harshness by which they have revolted the feelings—we speak

of a universality in their charge, the vagueness of which, apart from its vehemence, is revolting to the judgment, or to what may be called the experimental sense of truth among men. Instead of manifesting the depravity of man's nature to his conscience, they have put the conscience into a state of remonstrance against it; nor can we imagine a wider discrepancy than that which obtains between the doctrine as nakedly and roundly asserted in the article of a confession, and the doctrine as responded to by the actual feelings and convictions of general society. Nothing can be more unlike than this said doctrine when viewed as a mere theological category in the manifesto of a Church, and the same doctrine as felt and assented to in the vast majority of human consciences. We should like, on the one hand, to temper the representations of fierce and flaming orthodoxy; and on the other, to substantiate, and on the ground of experience, the whole amount of those scriptural denunciations which respect the guilt and the condemnation of our species. There is enough in the essential truth itself to provoke the enmity of the human heart; and it is not desirable that the enmity should be causelessly aggravated. Whatever is true must be submitted to and endured, however untasteful; yet that is no reason, but the contrary, why without occasion, and indeed without truth or justice, we should wantonly or gratuitously exasperate the antipathies of men; and we have long held it fortunate, that upon this subject in particular, the same consideration which serves to establish the principle, serves, in some degree at least, to soften or disarm the prejudice against it.

6. While we maintain, then, in the theological sense, which is the most important of all, the entire and universal corruption of human nature, we concede to the adversaries of this doctrine that there is a sense in which it may truly be said that there is virtue in the world, and that apart from Christianity, and beyond the circle of its influences on the character of men. There is a reality, a substantive reality and truth, in the recorded virtues of antiquity. There was not merely the recognition of what is right, but, in some instances and to a certain degree, the observance of it. There was virtue in the continence of Scipio; there was virtue in the self-devotion of Regulus; there was virtue, we have no doubt—what a philosophical observer of character could not but have marked and named as virtue in the understood sense of the term—in

the minds of Socrates and Plato. There are certain outrageous defenders of orthodoxy, who, to explain away these historical proofs, have resolved them into the love of applause. But, besides that this argues a sense and admiration of virtue among men—which surely is better than if not merely virtue, but even a reverence and regard for it, had no existence in the species—it is opposite to all experience and nature to affirm, that apart from religion, and therefore apart from Christianity, there is really no such thing as social or relative or patriotic virtue in the world. There is a native sense of integrity and honour in many a human bosom. There is a felt obligation in truth, and there would be the utmost moral discomfort attendant on the violation of it. There are not merely the instinctive, but the duteous regards of kindred and companionship, maintained by thousands in society, not because of the popularity which rewards them, but because of the principle which enjoins them—in the fulfilment of which there is the complacency of an approving, and in the transgression of which there would be the disquietude of a self-offended and therefore a reclaiming conscience. There is compassion, not in the shape alone of a passive sensibility but of an active principle, strengthened and enforced by virtuous considerations, prompting to the relief of wretchedness, and sustaining a habit of most useful philanthropy. It is neither wisdom nor truth to disallow these things—they are forced upon our daily observation. We meet with them in the amenities of kind and hospitable intercourse—we meet with them in the transactions of honourable business—we meet with them both in the generosities of the public walk, and in the thousand nameless offices of affection which take place in the bosom of families. Human nature, in some of her goodliest specimens, even anterior to the touch of any influence from Christianity, gives forth most pleasing and picturesque exhibitions of virtuousness; and it is not in the power of a relentless dogmatism either to do away their reality, or to do away our admiration of them.

7. We should be glad to admit all this, and the more that it can be done with all safety to the theological position, that man by nature is in a state of utter distance and disruption from God. This is the original righteousness from which he has so immeasurably fallen. The moralities which reciprocate between man and man upon earth have not made entire departure from the world. They are the moralities which connect earth with heaven that have wholly disappeared, and cannot be

recalled but in virtue of a singular expedient unfolded in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and brought, through the overtures of that gospel, to bear upon the species. When man is charged with guilt in Scripture—enormous, inexpiable, and infinite guilt—we rest the truth of that charge upon his ungodliness. It is here that the essence, that the elemental or constituent principle of his depravity lies. If this single count be made good, it establishes the impeachment, in whatever way the other counts and other articles are disposed of. What we affirm is—examine the mental constitution of the best man upon earth who has not been Christianized, you will find the honesties and the humanities of virtue there—you will find the magnanimous principle of truth and equity there—you will find family affection there, and withal find the active principle of benevolence there; but you will not find there either a duteous or an affectionate sense of loyalty to the Lawgiver in heaven. You will not accredit him with godliness because he does many things which God commands, or because he refrains from many things which God forbids, if it is not because God commands that he does the former, or because God forbids that he refrains from the latter. You will not ascribe to the religious principle what is only due to the social, or the moral, or the constitutional principle. Be on your guard only against this delusion; and you will at once perceive how man, in possession of many decencies and many virtuous accomplishments, may yet be in a state of entire spiritual nakedness. The Being who made him is disowned by him—the God from whom he sprung, and who upholds him continually, is to him an unknown and a forgotten thing. The creature has broken loose from the Creator; and, unmindful of his ceaseless and intimate dependence on the Power who gave him birth, he walks in the counsel of his own heart, and after the sight of his own eyes. He has assumed the sovereign guidance of himself; and in so doing he has usurped the rightful sovereignty of his Maker. He has made a divinity of his own will; and the great presiding Divinity of heaven and earth, who claims an ascendency over all that He has made, has been dethroned from the ascendency which belongs to Him over the heart of man. He hath turned him to his own way—he now abandons himself to the spontaneity of his own movements; and the will of God hath no practical, no overruling influence over this self-regulating, this self-directed creature. In this deep revolt of the inclinations from God:

in this lethargy of all sense and all principle towards Him; in this profound slumber that is upon all eyes, so that the Being who gives us every breath, and upholds us in all the functions and faculties of our existence, is wholly unregarded; in this there is nothing to move the moral indignancy of our own spirits, for the same death-like insensibility which prevents their being alive to the sense of God, prevents their being alive to the guilt of their ungodliness. But in the jurisprudence of the upper sanctuary, this guilt is enormous, and there brands us with the character, even as it has placed us in the condition, of accursed outcasts from heaven's family. In this world of sunken apathy towards God, there is no recognised standard by which to estimate the atrocity of our moral indifference to Him in whom we live and move and have our being. But the pure intelligences of heaven are all awake to it; and in that place where love to God is the reigning affection, and loyalty to His government the reigning principle of every spirit, nothing can exceed the sense of delinquency wherewith they look on the ingratitude and rebellion of our fallen world. When eyeing this territory of practical atheism, they cannot but regard it as a monstrous anomaly in creation—a nuisance which, if not transformed, must at length be swept away. As contrasted with the pure services and the lofty adorations of paradise, they must look on our earth, burdened with a graceless and godless progeny, as a spectacle of moral abomination. This unnatural enmity, or even unconcern, of man to his Maker, must be to them an object of utter loathsomeness; and when they look down upon a world that has exiled God from its affections, they will hold it a righteous thing that such a world should be exiled from its God.

8. Such are the views which might be addressed with good effect to the men of higher reach and refinement in your congregations. They should be made to perceive, and to perceive clearly, that the moral question between God and man is one thing, the moral question between man and man is another. The relation between God above and man below may remain a steady and invariable element, under all conceivable varieties of the relation between man and man upon earth. One man may be kind and another cruel to his neighbour, yet both be equally disjoined from God. The world, with the rational species upon it, may be adrift from Him, whatever the affinities or the affections of the individual members of that species for

each other. The likest thing to this part of moral science is that part of physical science, where, in contemplating the mighty distance of the sun from the earth, the greater and the less of all earthly distances shrink in their comparative littleness to nothing. The doctrine, when viewed in this light, of man's equal and universal corruption, under all the varieties of social or relative virtue that obtain in our world, has in it the largeness and comprehensiveness of a high philosophy. The Copernican system, which elevates the view from an isolated planet to a universe, does no more for the material economy than the evangelical system does for the moral economy—when, rising above the consideration of men's reciprocal duties and dealings with each other, it contemplates the high relation in which man stands to Him who is at once the source and centre of a universal family. The man who feels himself beset with earthly objects, and bounded by an earthly horizon, is incapable of imagining those magnificent reaches which separate the rolling worlds from each other. And so a mere citizen of earth, who attends but to the play and reciprocation of those moralities which circulate from one to another in the human family, may never have lifted his thoughts to that supernal morality by which the whole human family stand related to the universal Parent on whom they are suspended. And so their blindness to the doctrine of man's universal corruption is, after all, but the blindness of an earthly understanding. It evinces the same contraction in regard to the moral world, which *they* have in regard to the material, who cannot expatiate in thought upon the vastness that lies beyond the limits of our own horizon, and above the canopy of our own sky. When we speak to them of the great moral depravation which has come upon our species, they receive it with incredulity, because they can only think of the terrestrial moralities which relate man and man to each other, and they think not of that transcendental morality which belongs to the relation between man and his God.

9. In further illustration of this high theme, when propounding it to the more lettered of your hearers, you may add that the planet we occupy forms part of the material world; and that if it lost the inclination of its gravity to the sun, it would drift waywardly in space, and become an outcast from the harmonies of the great mundane system. Such an arrangement would, besides, disturb and derange mightily the terrestrial physics of our globe, yet without their annihilation or the

entire reversal of any of their laws—for still might magnetism and cohesion and chemistry retain their wonted affinities, and produce their wonted effects, even on the surface of this stray world. And so the rational species by whom our planet is inhabited, form part of the moral world; and, should the hold of our allegiance to God be broken, we quit the place that belonged to us, and wander afar from God's spiritual and unfallen family. Such an event must—such an event has—introduced the utmost derangement and disorder both into the relations and the ethics of our terrestrial society. Yet it has not utterly destroyed these relations, nor has it utterly extinguished the ethics; and there do, in the midst of all our alienation from God—there do, after the extinction of all true religious principle, survive other principles that operate beauteously and beneficially among the families of earth. There still subsist many of the equities of social life, many of the charities of home and kindred, many of the courtesies not of manner alone, but of honest friendship, many in short of the honourable and kind-hearted virtues of good citizenship—the citizenship of the world we mean, though we have no part in the citizenship of heaven. It is not needed, to prop the cause of orthodoxy, it is not needed harshly to refuse them, as has been done by many a stern theologian. There are undoubted virtues in the world—but still the virtues of a world which, in reference to God, is lying in wickedness. There are the affinities and the duties of brotherhood amongst us—but such a brotherhood as we might observe among exiles, whom their crimes have separated from the community which gave them birth. We have not entirely broken out among ourselves; but we have entirely broken with our God. We have laws of our own which we may or may not inviolably adhere to—laws of state, laws of honour, laws of conventional morality; but the law of love to God has lost its hold of us; and before the justice that sits on His eternal throne we must all lie low in the abyss of condemnation. We may range the better and the best of such a world around a terrestrial standard; but under this celestial standard, to speak of sinners greater and less, is to speak of distances greater and less of earthly places from the sun. God reads on every forehead the characters of revolt and dissatisfaction against Himself; He looks across a dreary gulf of separation from us all, and finds that there is none who understandeth, none who seeketh after God.

10. After having removed the prejudices and antipathies of

the higher class of hearers, you will find that the great argument for convincing of sin is with all classes a direct appeal to their consciences; and that this is generally the way in which the lesson is carried. It is just by telling all of their ungodliness. The considerations hitherto adduced are of chief effect on the literary and cultivated classes, whose taste and admiration are on the side of virtue; and who need to be told how it is, that, even with the admission of all the virtue which they would ascribe to our nature, the tremendous charges and denunciations of Scripture remain unbroken. The people at large have not the same prejudices of imagination to obstruct the entry of the truth into their minds. They will bear to be told of their depravity; but it is of the utmost importance that, instead of the form of sound words which play upon the ear, their consciences should become tenderly and intelligently alive to it. For this purpose, you can bid them recollect the tenor of their thoughts and feelings on any ordinary day. You can ask them how much or how little the conception of God is in their minds from one end of the week to the other of it. You can urge on them their undoubted heedlessness both of God and of His law. You can represent the paramount claims of the Creator over the creature, to whom He has given birth and being; and then put it to them how miserably short they are of the adequate loyalty, of the adequate obedience. The very words of Scripture, variously but most significantly expressive both of God's glory and man's guiltiness, will tell on the unsophisticated minds of the peasantry; and whether its declarations relate to the prerogatives of God's lofty and unchangeable law, or to their own infinite deficiency, they have both a conscience and a consciousness that will respond to them. This is substantial preaching; and on its efficacy it depends whether Christ be lightly esteemed by them, or it fall with acceptance on their ears, that unto them a Saviour has been born.

11. It is such demonstration as this that places you on high vantage-ground for making the people understand that in themselves they are the outcasts of a hopeless condemnation. It is a principle in jurisprudence which admits of easy vindication, and which accords with the practice of all earthly governments, that if a man offend in one point he is guilty of all—at least in so far as to have put the law into the relation of a displeased and avenging enemy towards him. With what emphasis then might you urge the menaces and the terrors of its outraged authority—

when, grounding your argument on the ungodliness of your hearer you convict him of revolt against God in the highest part of his nature, and that not in one act merely, but in a ceaseless and inveterate habit of disobedience. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, is the first and the greatest commandment. On this you might prefer against one and all of your hearers the charge of the first and the greatest disloyalty; and so, urging home the law's uncompromising dignity, the awful certainty and immutability of its sanctions, the high state and authority of the Divine government, under which it is impossible for sin to pass without a punishment or without an expiation, may you shut them up unto the faith.

12. But the question still remains—In what way, or rather in what order, should certain higher views delivered from the Chair, and more especially those on the imputation of Adam's sin, be delivered from the pulpit? In a former lecture we spoke of the manner in which certain advocates of an immediate imputation would force the acknowledgment of their doctrine on the understandings of men—and this to a greater extent than the understanding is able for. We might have a clear comprehension of what the doctrine is—we might have a thorough conviction of its truth from the statements and testimonies of Scripture, and yet not be able to see the grounds of it in the reason and nature of things. There are theologians who profess a deeper insight than this; and would tell us that not only so it is, but also tell us how it is. There seems to be presumption enough in not being satisfied with the authoritative, though naked and simple averments of the Bible; but the presumption becomes far more intolerable when they would force the acceptance of their dogmata on other minds than their own, and would charge it as a shortcoming from orthodoxy, that we cannot sympathize with their confident reasonings, on the terms of the federal relationship between God as the lawgiver, and Adam as the head and representative of all his posterity. It seems more like the humility of a little child to take what Scripture tells of this matter on the authority of Scripture alone, and not to attempt the investing of it with light from another quarter, as if we beheld its place and its principle in a system of natural jurisprudence, and so could expatiate upon it in the same style of intellectual mastery, as if we were engaged with a demonstration in any of the natural sciences.

13. Now, to pass from the scientific to the pulpit or the prac-

tical treatment of this high theme, what we have to complain of is, that the very same force which theologians would practise on the understandings, is sometimes practised by ministers and practical writers on the consciences of men. One of the greatest services which can be effected in the work of Christianization is to convince men of sin; and instrumentally speaking, we hold the best way of doing this is, to make each man's own sinfulness manifest to each man's own conscience. But we cannot think it a judicious or an effectual procedure—when, instead of charging a reader or hearer with the guilt of his own delinquencies or the ungodliness of his own natural habit, he is charged, and often at the outset of the demonstration, as if this were the right chronological order, with the guilt contracted by Adam in paradise. There is that in the man's conscience, even in his natural conscience, which will go along with the first charge. There is not that in it which will go along with the second; and therefore this might be a most inappropriate topic to begin with—seeing that the great efficacy of preaching lies in the manifestation which it makes of truth to the conscience. And yet there are ministers who, as if in a tone of moral indignancy or of zeal for the honour of the law and of the Lawgiver, will tell their people, and on the very first introduction of their argument, of their foul and daring rebellion against God—in that they partook with Adam of the disobedience committed by him in the garden of Eden. Why, their conscience will no more go along with this affirmation, than if told that they partook with Adam of that apple which was given him by Eve after she had pulled it off the tree. This is really not the way by which to enlist the conscience on the side of Christianity; and the minister who adopts it lies open to the charge of consulting his own credit by the flaring exhibition which he makes of his own orthodoxy, rather than consulting the advantage of his hearers. It is fitted, in truth, to set the conscience into a state of revolt and resistance against the truth as it is in Jesus; and we are fully persuaded of that high wisdom—the wisdom we mean of winning souls—that it would proceed differently—would address itself differently to the task. It would lay no injurious stress at the commencement of this great undertaking, on the minds and consciences with which it was in the act of dealing. This doctrine of an immediate imputation would not form the topic of any of its primary demonstrations, but would be kept in reserve for a higher stage in the scholarship of the

gospel of Jesus Christ. For such a distinction as we now point at between the prior and ulterior lessons of the Christian course, we have the sanction of manifold examples in the teaching both of Christ and of His apostles. Our Saviour taught His disciples as they were able to bear it. He refrained at the outset of His ministry from entering on such topics as were too hard for them. He taught them to beware of putting new wine into old bottles; and often, in the teaching of His immediate followers, do we recognise the wisdom, and the tact, and the delicacy by which they suited their instructions to the apprehensions and the progress of those with whom they had to do. There is none who adverts more frequently than Paul to this distinction between the preliminary and the advanced lessons of what may be termed the religious education of his converts—dealing out milk to babes, and strong meat to those of full age—charging the former with still being carnal, and designating the latter as those who had attained to the station of spiritual men—telling us of a progress or going on from the first principles of the doctrine of Christ to a subsequent perfection, attained by as many as were perfect; and so he spake a higher wisdom among those that were perfect, observing a skilful adaptation to the state and proficiency of the various classes among his converts. He had both the wisdom of one who could lay well the foundation, and also of one who was a wise master-builder. But he would make use of the proper materials for each, and not confound the things which were fit for the superstructure with the things which belonged to the lower part of the building. His theology embraced both the elementary and the transcendental; and Peter was fully aware of this distinction, when he warned those disciples who had only yet attained to the former, against a precipitate and premature entry upon the latter—ascribing those higher lessons of Paul to the higher wisdom that had been given to him; but at the same time intimating the dangerous use which might be made of them by those who had reached but a lower degree of wisdom. In the Epistles of Paul, he tells us there "are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

14. It is thus that I would have a minister of the gospel address himself to the subject of human sinfulness. The law is said to be a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ; and he should preach the law to his hearers, both in its extent and in

its terrors. It is thus that he speaks at once to the consciences and to the fears of men. In making known to them the lofty and spiritual commandment of God, he lights up within them a sense of their own deficiencies, and of their condemnation at the bar of the holy and august Lawgiver. But this is done only by making bare their own personal delinquencies to the eye of their own consciousness. History might tell them of Adam and of his doings—revelation might tell them of that mysterious ordination in the jurisprudence of God, by which He deals with mankind as if they had partaken of Adam's disobedience—but conscience can tell them only of their own disobedience. This is the faculty which takes no cognizance of the matters that lie beyond, but only of the matters that lie within our own personal experience. It is true that memory has to do with conscience; but it is the memory only of our own things, not the memory of what has been done by others, but of what has been done by ourselves. If we desire, then, to ply what the Bible speaks of as the great instrument of conversion, which is the manifestation of truth unto the conscience—our demonstration must be, not of what history tells respecting the transactions of a former age long gone by, but of what conscience tells, or what the awakened conscience will respond to, respecting a present sinfulness. The doctrine of Adam's imputation may be a word of wisdom to those who, now past the birth of their Christianity, are going on unto perfection; but most assuredly it is not a word in season either for the conviction or the alarm of unconverted sinners. In dealing with them, the matter on hand is their own profligacy, their own profaneness, their own open defiance to the authority of God, or daring violations of His law; or, in the absence of these and such other glaring iniquities, their own deep and cleaving ungodliness, their devotion to earth and its shortlived interests, their heedlessness of eternity, and practical unconcern about God. It is not by charging men with the guilt of a transaction which took place thousands of years ago—it is not thus that you will enlist their consciences on the side of your high argument. It is by charging them with the guilt of sins which their own hands have committed, and of a sinfulness which vitiates every affection and desire of their own hearts. There may be other and higher lessons in the scholarship of Christianity; but this is the rudimental lesson of the course—the great lesson to begin with; and to mix up with this initial and elementary teaching any demonstration of our sinfulness in

Adam, is altogether a premature attempt on the part of an overzealous orthodoxy—fitted to mystify the understanding, and to repel the conscience, and to scare away the approaches of him who, under another treatment, might have become a hopeful inquirer after the truth as it is in Jesus. We cannot imagine a more grievous impolicy than thus to pluck from the altitudes of a transcendental theology a recondite and mysterious topic wherewith to darken our entrance upon its studies—and more especially where there is so much of the plain, and the clear, and the unquestionable, for giving us the right impulse and pointing out to us the right direction, at the outset of our religious earnestness. Surely there is enough of the palpable in our own actual sinfulness and actual sins, in our personal liabilities to the vengeance of an angry God, in the condemnation that lies upon us, in the reckoning and then the judgment that await us because of our own proper deservings and of what ourselves have done —there is strength enough of argument in these to convince and to alarm us—enough to make it manifest even in the light of our own minds, that we are in the hands of an offended Lawgiver, enough to invest with all the fearful importance which attaches to a question of life or death, the great question of our eternity; and to prompt the imploring cry of—wherewith shall we appear before God?—what shall we do to be saved?

15. It is in the anxious prosecution of this question, and under the guidance of that Spirit who convinces of sin, that our footsteps are led to the Saviour, and our eyes are made to behold Jesus Christ as set forth to us in the gospel. It is not then, most assuredly, that curiosity is the predominant feeling of the mind. There is neither room nor leisure for the exercise of this faculty, when agitated by the terrors of the law, and casting about in uncertainty and fear for the method of our deliverance therefrom. At such a season the practical overbears the speculative, or keeps it in abeyance; and could we only be made to know on satisfying evidence what the way or the scheme of salvation is, it is not a mere intellectual difficulty which attaches to the principle of the scheme, or to the rationale of our salvation, that would repel us from the acceptance of it. There may be a broad and overpowering evidence that so it is, even in the midst of profound darkness on the question of how it is. It is thus that in the face of all difficulties, the salvation by Jesus Christ, as made known to us in the New Testament, bears such unquestionable signatures of tenderness and truth as to recom-

mend itself to many a conscience-stricken sinner as indeed being worthy of all acceptation. When they read of Christ having taken upon Himself the burden of our condemnation, of His dying an expiation for our offences, of His having become sin for us though He knew no sin, and all that a God of everlasting and unchangeable justice might at the same time be a Saviour —there is in all this so much to pacify the fears of guilt even in the full view of Heaven's august and inviolable sacredness, that the spectacle of the Cross, and the wondrous harmony which it exhibits of the truth and the mercy that meet together there, is not only fitted to draw all men towards it, but to convince them of its being indeed the power of God and the wisdom of God for the redemption of a world that had wandered away from Him —a method devised in love by Himself for the recovery of His strayed children. But when we thus acquiesce in the way of salvation as the very way suited to us, and this on the evidence of its felt Divine adaptation to the wants of our moral nature, we give our ready consent to the doctrine of imputation. There is no quarrel on our part with the imputation of Christ's righteousness. We feel our need of it, and we thankfully close with it; and we do not repel the mercy which has brought it to our doors, because there is in it a depth and a mystery of love which we do not comprehend. And yet, viewed as a question of jurisprudence, the same speculative difficulty attaches to this as to any other mode of imputation. When the righteousness of Christ is accepted by God as our righteousness, or when this righteousness, though achieved by another, is reckoned unto us, there is the like inscrutable policy in such an administration as when the guilt of Adam is made our guilt—or as when the guilt contracted by another is reckoned unto us. Now what we contend for is, that, whether in a series of instructions from the pulpit, or in the process of dealing in private with individual consciences, your first notices of such a peculiarity in the government of that Being whose thoughts are not as man's thoughts, and whose ways are not as man's ways, should be associated with the offers of an imputed righteousness, and not with the denunciations of an imputed guilt. There is a sense or conviction of sin which is preparatory to the acceptance of the Saviour; but it is not by telling the inquirer of his sin in Adam that you help forward that conviction. Tell him of his own sin. Lay home to him the guilt of his ungodliness. Speak of the great moral enormity which lies in the aversion of his mind, or at the

very least in its indifference to God. Unfold to him the dependence and therefore the duty which subsists between the creature and the Creator, to whom it owes birth and being, and its capabilities of enjoyment, and the continuance of these throughout every moment of its living existence. Charge him, as does the apostle, with the grievous delinquency of not seeking after God, and falling short in all things of His glory. At this stage of tuition, treat with him in his own person, and on the score of his own personal delinquencies; and if another person is at length to be introduced, between whom and him you are to announce an exchange of rights or of responsibilities, let the first be Jesus Christ with the everlasting righteousness which He has brought in, and which is unto all and upon all who believe. Let this mystery in the jurisprudence of God's dealings with His subjects be first presented to him on the vehicle of that mercy which is offered to us in the gospel, whereby the guilt of our own deservings is laid upon another, and the righteousness of His deservings is laid upon us: and all this, you will observe, previous to any intimation on your part that the guilt of another's deservings has, by the constitution of that economy under which we are placed, been laid upon us. In the earlier lessons of Christianity, and when directly dealing with human consciences, the demonstration of man's guilt takes precedency of the declaration of God's mercy; and man must be made to know and to feel that he is a sinner, ere he will welcome or receive the tidings of a Saviour. It is in the ulterior lessons, and when speaking to men whether on the eve of conversion or for their further confirmation in the truth as it is in Jesus, that this matter of imputation comes in our way, this substitution of one for another, so that the righteousness or guilt of the former is made the righteousness or guilt of the latter also. It is now that the order of precedency ought to be reversed, and the doctrine of God's goodness to us in Christ should come before the doctrine of God's severity in Adam—the doctrine of what we are offered in Christ before the doctrine of what we have suffered or lost in Adam. To convert men, we have to tell of the penalties which Christ hath borne, and of the merits which He hath achieved for them; and so of the rightful immunities and the rightful privileges which, as the reward of His obedience and not of their own, are now laid for acceptance at their doors. And then, not to convert men but to confirm them in the truth which they have already received, is the

doctrine of Adam's imputation given forth as the lesson of a higher wisdom addressed to those who are thus far perfected in their Christian education. It is after they have become heirs of Christ, and partakers with Him in the rewards of the obedience of the second Adam, that they are told of their guilt and corruption by nature, as having been the analogous forfeitures incurred by the disobedience of the first Adam, who had entailed on his posterity the burden of all the debt which himself had contracted, and of all the depravity which himself had taken on and transmitted to his children. In everything let me give thanks. If, in virtue of my descent from Adam, I have been made to share in all the disabilities he inflicted on our species, in virtue of my connexion with Christ—a connexion which one and all are invited to enter on—I am made to share in all the benefits of His mediatorship. The infliction but for a moment is as nothing when compared with the eternal and exceeding weight of that glory which the other has purchased for my rightful and everlasting inheritance.

16. This is the very way in which Paul conducted his argument in his Epistle to the Romans. He reasons there both of sin and of righteousness; but it is first of the personal sins of men, and then of the imputed righteousness of Christ. He begins with a frightful catalogue of human transgressions; but the transgression of Adam has no part in it, and only the actual transgressions of those who spring from him—deepening from age to age in atrocity and guilt with the progress of this world's degeneracy. He charges both Jews and Gentiles with being all under sin—but it is with their own distinct and characteristic sins that he charges each of them; and it is solely by the demonstration of these that he would shut up men to the faith of the Saviour. He passed judgment on them not because of the things which he said descended upon them from Adam, but because of the things which he said themselves did. He holds remonstrance, not because of what they inherited from another, but because of what they committed themselves. Thinkest thou, O man, that thou wilt escape, who doest these things, who committest these things? The only retribution spoken of by Paul at this stage of his argument, is that which is rendered to men because of their deeds—the tribulation and the anguish, the indignation and the wrath, rendered to every man who doeth evil. It is upon these, and in the first instance upon these alone, that he brings in the world as guilty before God—be-

cause all have sinned, because all have come short of His glory; and it is from these that he makes instant transition to that righteousness, not of themselves but of another, which is unto all and upon all who believe—who are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. It is associated with Him, and with His errand of mercy to the world, that we first read of imputation. This mystery is first introduced to notice, not in the form of a curse upon mankind, but in the form of a blissful and bounteous dispensation—the imputation of our guilt to the great Redeemer of men, and in virtue of which He becomes our propitiation through faith in the blood that He shed for us—the imputation of His righteousness to us, and in virtue of which the Lawgiver on high can be just while the justifier of them who believe in Jesus. It is in conjunction with these precious annunciations of welcome and good-will, it is in the midst of this feast of fat things, that he prolongs his discourse for more than a whole chapter on imputation—an imputation which gladdened and assured the heart of Abraham, and of ours also who, if we only believe, are admitted to the same peace with God, and to rejoice, as did the father of the faithful, in the hope of glory. And it is to them who with the apostle are thus joying in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, it is to them who along with himself have received the atonement, it is with them that he enters on the doctrine of Adam's imputation—looking back, as it were, from the eminence of their now felt security on the way by which the world had been led, from the time that sin and death made their ingress upon our species, and passed onward in the form of a descending ruin through all its generations. It is then that, as if speaking wisdom to those who are perfect, he deals out his strong meat to the men who are able to bear it—that meat which he had hitherto withheld from the trembling inquirer, or from him who, only yet on the transition pathway between nature and grace, was still in the tenderness and infancy of a new-born convert. He is now holding converse with full-grown Christians who had described the successive stages of tribulation and patience and experience, and could at length lift their erect and unabashed visages, in the confidence of a hope which maketh not ashamed, and also of a love which casteth out fear. Such are the men whom the apostle is now instructing in the deep things of God—beginning with the parallelism between the first and the second Adam, and proceeding onward to the higher mysteries of election and sovereign grace, and the other

unsearchable judgments of Him who is past finding out. Nay, proceeding onward with the eye of a prophet from the past to the future, from the commencement to the final destinies of our species, when after the rejection and then the restoration of God's ancient people—successive footsteps as it were along the march of time to the world's regeneration—all Israel shall be saved, that the fulness of the Gentiles might come in; and this before that great and final disclosure shall take place, when time shall be no more, and the mystery of God shall be finished. Paul knew well how to adapt his instructions to the varied state and progress of his hearers, so as rightly to divide or rightly to distribute the word of truth—giving to every man a word in season—beginning with the first elements, and proceeding onward from these to the higher lessons of the Christian course. When speaking to the careless and ungodly, and with a view to their conviction of sin, we venture to say that he uttered not one word of imputation, or of their responsibility for the sins of another; but opened his way to their consciences by telling them, and with all earnestness, of the curse and the condemnation under which they lay because of their own sins. When he had thus awakened their fears, it was then, and for the purpose of again stilling the tempest which he has raised, it was then that he spake of imputation—and this is not the imputation of another's guilt to them, but the imputation of their guilt to another, and the imputation in return to them of that other's righteousness. This mystery of godliness was first set forth to their view, not in the aspect of terror or menace, but shrined in that mercy which harmonized all the other attributes of the Godhead, and rejoiced over them. It is thus that, after having gained over their acceptance for the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, he as it were smoothed the way for the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's guilt. It is thus that, after having invited men to that grace by which they are made the partakers of another's righteousness, he could talk to them largely and at leisure of that which now was a word in season—he could talk of that like wondrous economy by which, in their state of nature, they are held to be the partakers of another's condemnation. There is room for wonder still, but most assuredly no room or reason to complain of God. We are not yet admitted for the gratification of our curiosity to a full view of the counsels of God; but to one and all of us has the door of admittance been opened to His kindness and tender mercy in Jesus Christ our Lord.

SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

PART II.

ON THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL REMEDY.

CHAPTER I.

ON CERTAIN PRECURSORY REASONINGS IN USE AMONG THEOLOGIANS, WHEN THEY FIRST ADDRESS THEMSELVES TO THE SUBJECT OF THE ATONEMENT.

1. It is ultimately of service to every good cause, not to lay greater stress on any argument employed in supporting it than it can well bear; for when we do commit the impolicy of exaggerating the strength of a weak argument, then on the exposure of that weakness a discredit is very apt to be laid upon the cause, which rightfully belongs to its unwise and unwary advocates. It had been well if, in the defence of Christianity, or in the vindication of its particular tenets, they who fought on the right side of the question had at all times known wherein it is that the main strength of orthodoxy lies—whether as respects religion in general, or any of its doctrines.

2. You will remember that in the very first sentence of Paley's work on the Evidences of Christianity, he tells his reader that he will not stop to inquire whether the world stood in need of a revelation; and so, without making this a preliminary consideration at all, he, instead of speculating on the necessity of a revelation from heaven, engages immediately with the proof of it. If true, it was an event, an historical event; and therefore he casts about for its historical evidences. This is safer ground certainly than that on which many a speculator has ventured to

expatiate, more especially when, intruding into things not seen, he founds his argument on his own conjectural imaginations of the best and most befitting policy for the Godhead. It is not for the philosopher's but for the poet's eye "to glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;" and as imagination bodies forth the form of things unknown, it is the poet's pen which turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothings "a local habitation and a name." Theological authorship is peopled with the embodied forms of things unknown; and many are the airy nothings which have found a name and local habitation there. It were a great achievement to find out the principle, and make a thorough application of it, on which to separate the legitimate from the transcendental—so as to mark off the *terra cognita* of human thought from that remote and hypothetical region, in which spirits of a certain lofty and ambitious cast so delight to luxuriate. Thus to restrain inquiry within its proper boundaries, and give a right direction to it, would require a *novum organum* for our science, wherein to fix and define what may be termed the logic of theology, to limit and lay on its own rightful foundation the philosophy of the Christian argument.

3. I have often affirmed in your hearing, that in no science and no subject of human contemplation, has the spirit of hypothesis dared more presumptuously, or wantoned more licentiously than in our own; and yet surely on every principle of philosophy, there cannot be named a territory of thought where the humble diffidence and docility of little children are more imperiously called for. When we think of the eternity before, and on the still more baffling mystery of the eternity behind us—when we think of the wondrous God who unites both, and comprehends both—when we think of the universe on which He sits enthroned, stretching far beyond the ken of human eye, onward and outward to the viewless depths of immensity—is it, we ask, for the creatures of our little sphere and our little day, to sit in judgment on the principles or policy of that high administration which reaches to all ages and embraces all worlds? Our becoming attitude, surely, is that of learners; and our proper business, when studying the volume of nature or the volume of revelation, is not to excogitate truth but to receive it. The light of observation which tells something of ourselves, and but a small part of the creation which is around us—the light brought from heaven which tells something of the Creator, and but a very small part of His ways—it is surely our path of safety

and wisdom to walk humbly and duteously by these, not the masters of either, but the yielding and passive interpreters of both—content on the one domain with such responses as we meet to the question of, What findest thou? alike content on the other domain with such reponses as we meet to the question of, What readest thou?

4. In conformity with these views, we have long had the feeling of a certain presumptuous and *a priori* character in the very attempt to demonstrate the necessity of revelation; and, like Paley, we had infinitely rather investigate its proofs than speculate on its necessity. And we have somewhat the same feeling in regard to that doctrine of revelation on which we are now entering, and in their treatment of which, many authors present us with a previous chapter, and some even with a whole treatise on the necessity of an atonement. If it be meant that many a helpless victim of his own depravity, and an outcast from his God, needed a something both to replace his confidence in the Divine favour and to furnish him alike with the motives and the powers of a new obedience, this can be well admitted—though, as a preliminary topic and before we investigate the truth of the doctrine itself, it is by no means indispensable. But if this necessity, instead of being made to hinge on the home-felt wants of man, be made to hinge on the exigencies of heaven's government, or, bolder still, on the recondite and interior nature of the Godhead—I for one rather would forego, nay, do recoil from this transcendental speculation; and far rather than predict an atonement from my assumed and anterior intimacy with Him that sitteth on high—far rather than dare so lofty an ascent, as for the purpose of bringing down Christ upon the earth—far rather than thus foretell, would I be told of the atonement by a word brought nigh unto me; and, instead of prescribing this as a law to the Almighty, would I take it as a lesson from His own mouth, and thence learn from the information so set before me, both of His character and His ways.

5. And yet there is room in theology somewhere for this very topic which I may seem now to repudiate—the necessity of the atonement. My objection is not to the theme, but to the place and precedency which have been given to it. We must not lose the benefit of the theme, or let it disappear from the science; but the question is, when, logically and in the right order of human knowledge, or by the law of the human faculties, it should be brought into the argument? And this for a higher

object than a mere intellectual adjustment, even to assign for man his becoming attitude; and that, as we said before, instead of giving law to the Lord of the Universe, he should take the lesson which God sets before him.

6. Let it be understood, then, that when the necessity of the atonement is made the subject of reasoning, and that precursory to the consideration of its direct and historical evidence, the reason is commonly made to turn on the abstractions of jurisprudence and the general state of the world. It is regarded more as a question of constitutional law between God and the species, than as a question prompted by the workings of an individual conscience, and breaking forth into the exclamation of the jailer, What shall I do to be saved? Now, here we have a necessity, a strong and a deeply felt necessity, with an inquiry germinated therefrom, which, so far from being presumptuous or illegitimate, has its pertinent and right place along the direct process of Christianization; and usually, if not universally, is lifted from the heart of every anxious or agonized sinner, on his passage from the darkness of nature to the marvellous light of the gospel. This feeling of a general uneasiness or want, the apprehension of uncertainty and fear in the heart of the sinner, is truly different from that cool and intellectual estimate of the necessity for an atonement, on which the speculator would found the confident guess, or even the almost decisive argument, that such an atonement must be. It follows not because the conscience-stricken sinner, anterior to his knowledge of the Bible, has good ground for his difficulties and terrors, that therefore the ambitious speculator, anterior to the same knowledge, has equally good ground for the solution that he would give of these difficulties, or the relief that he would propose for these terrors, and whereby he would seem to anticipate the informations of the Bible. There might be data enough for justifying the question of the one, but not data enough for justifying the reply to that question, or even an approximation to the reply of the other, given by him in the confidence of his *a priori* reasonings, apart from and anterior to the informations of the Bible. In justification of the sinner's fears we would say, that without a Bible there is enough to minister disquietude; but in condemnation of the speculator's presumption, we would also say, that there is nothing to minister the comfort by which to appease it. I hope you understand the distinction which I now labour to impress. In the mind of the sinner there is the general feeling of a want;

and what we affirm is, that, apart from the Christian message, he can meet with nothing special to satisfy it in the whole compass of nature, or of possible observation. In the mind of the speculator there is the notion of a want; but instead of the helplessness felt by the former, he, on that very notion, thinks he can excogitate for himself, if not the certainty, at least the plausible, nay, the highly probable conclusion of that precise, that specific remedy which is unfolded to the world in the New Testament. Now, what I want to lay discountenance upon is this *a priori* imagination, and would warn you from supposing that, because of any conceived adaptation between the distress of guilty nature and the atonement in the gospel, there is therefore any ground beforehand for inferring from the existence of the one the reality of the other. And yet after that this atonement, instead of matter of inference, has become a matter of revelation, then it is that this adaptation becomes palpable, and is of such argumentative power too, as often to prove the stepping-stone by which the sinner makes his way from the agitations of conscience to peace and joy in believing. Now the question is, How comes it, that while we reject the inference of the speculator as hypothetical, we admit that of the sinner to be logical and conclusive?

7. We have already asserted of the sinner, that, with or without a Bible, he may have a solid, a firmly experimental ground for his fears—the misgivings of a conscience at his felt violations of a known law, and which law at the same time stands inseparably associated with the notion of an offended Lawgiver. Whatever the degree of strength or of weakness may be which you ascribe to the evidences of natural theology, let it be remembered that even the imaginations of uncertainty may be of powerful effect as the ministers of terror. Nay, the very uncertainty, like figures seen through a dim transparency, may aggravate the terror—misshapen into things of spectral form and outline, by the hazy or distorted medium through which they pass. If I know of some fearful risk, though in the ratio of but one to ten, this of itself were a most legitimate ground of anxiety and terror; and we need seek no further, therefore, into the principle or basis of a sinner's fears, seeing that he may be equally in terror, whether he knows, or simply because he knows not, the destiny that awaits him; but who, in looking back on the retrospect of his past life, and onward to the viewless eternity that lies before him, is visited by the sense

of a present guilt and the dread of an anticipated vengeance—pursued, as if by an arrow sticking fast, with the fixed and festering thought, that his soul is lost, that his eternity is undone.

8. What we have here, then, is the well-grounded feeling of a subjective want; but the mere existence of such a feeling is no evidence for the objective reality of some specific remedy, not yet made known to us from any other quarter. To illustrate this, let me make the supposition, though a violent one, that men were born into the world with the same appetency for food which they have at present, but that the counterpart food was wanting—that, nevertheless, they could live for years under this privation, yet that in the sensation of a constant and ever-increasing hunger, they had to sustain the agony of a sore endurance. From the mere existence of the subjective feeling, they would not have even the imagination of the objective thing that was fitted to meet and to appease it; and not till this requisite thing was produced and placed within reach of observation, and actually used, could they at all predict or foresee what that was in external nature which suited the physical aspiration, the craving from within, of their sentient economy. And the same holds true of all the other affinities which relate the feelings of the subjective man to the products or the elements of that objective world in which he is placed. You would not, from your single experience of the various feelings in the subjective class, infer the correspondent things of the objective class which were respectively suited to them. The mere feeling of hunger would not of itself suggest even the notion of food, and far less afford any demonstration of its reality. The mere feeling of thirst, apart from the sight or the experience of water, would be no argument for the existence of this element in the world. The mere painful affection of a want arising from the organic structure of the lungs, when the needful aliment of breathing was not supplied to it, would convey no intimation to us either of the certainty or probability of an atmosphere. We could not thus find our way by an inferential process from the experience of certain felt wants to the reality of certain counterpart objects. The mere adaptation of things which are possible to feelings which are actual, do not lead us even to the conception, and far less to an assurance of the reality of these things. We must have both the feelings and the objects brought within our reach. We must have the sensation of the one, and, distinct from this,

we must have the knowledge of the other. Or, to express it differently, we must have observation for both ; and observation of experience too, ere we can know the adaptation between them. And then, to be sure, there do come into our possession the materials of a most glorious argument ; and from the adaptation between the fruits of the earth and the sustenance of its living generations, as well as their intense and universal cry of hunger—of water, that cheap and common bounty, to the sensation universal too of thirst—of air, compounded as it is, to the apparatus of respiration in all animals, none of whom could breathe or exist in any other—of light to the eye—of sound to the organs of hearing—in short, of the many thousand objects in the world to the wants, and the susceptibilities, and the powers of the innumerable living creatures upon its surface. From the wants alone we could fancy nothing of the counterparts ; but from the wants in conjunction with their objects, made known to us in another way and by a direct evidence of their own, and after the finding of a full yet nice and adequate adjustment between them ;—from the manifold adaptations, we say, thus certified and made plain to us, do we come to the resistless conclusion that the world we live in is a workmanship—that the world has a God.

9. Now, we have felt wants in our mental as well as in our corporeal economy. More especially, there are the unutterable longings of a spirit, conscience-stricken because of iniquity, and in sore distress under the agonies of a present remorse and the dreary forebodings of an unprovided eternity. I do not see why, in the physical department, we should isolate ourselves from the world, and then put our ingenuity to the task of guessing from the knowledge of our wants, and our wants alone, what the objects might be in the outer panorama which are suited to them. And neither can I see why, in the moral department, we should isolate ourselves from the Bible, and thus, making a voluntary abridgment of the data within our reach, put ourselves on the rack of speculation—and that for the purpose of trying how well we can guess, from the wants too as before, and the wants alone, whether there be a revelation at all, and then what be the likeliest doctrines there to meet the appetencies and the needs of our moral nature. I would make shorter work of it. I would neither address myself to the first inquiry with the world shut out, nor would I address myself to the second inquiry with the Bible shut out. I would go forth at once on the volume of

nature, and thence learn, from the adaptations there to man's bodily wants, that there was a Divinity in the world. And I would go forth at once on the volume of Scripture, and might also learn there, from the adaptations to man's moral and spiritual wants, that there is a Divinity in the world. More particularly would I lay immediate hold on that which professes to be the bread of life come down from heaven, or the precious doctrine of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I would at once make trial of it. I would bring the objective doctrine into contact with subjective human nature; and on the actual finding of its efficacy to quell the misgivings and the fears of a guilty sinner's bosom, would I found on this and numerous other adaptations, that the Bible, so profound a discerner, so skilful a provider for the wants of humanity, must have been the work of One who knew the secrets of the heart, and that verily God is in it of a truth.

10. The necessity of the atonement experienced as a feeling, is altogether different from the necessity of the atonement conceived of as a notion. To him who is occupied with the feeling, it forms a practical impulse, under which he is led to seek for relief from the distress and the fears of nature; nor will it be long ere you find him exploring the Bible, and pondering with deep anxiety and attention over the statements which lie before him there. To him who is occupied with the notion, it forms the premise of an argument which he must prosecute to a conclusion, on the side of the doctrine it may be; and on which previous verdict it may perhaps depend, whether he will admit the Bible to a hearing on the question at all. Now I ask, is this the condition that the authentic record of our authentic communication from God to man should be suffered to remain in for one moment? Is the principal witness, whose testimony is decisive of the whole point at issue, to be kept in abeyance till we have settled all the preliminaries which we choose to interpose in the way of that only examination which can determine the matter on hand? To what purpose all our study of the evidences, and on which we profess to be satisfied with the credentials of the book, if our examination of the contents of the book—the book of God's own counsel, the record of His authoritative message to the world—is thus to be postponed, nay, even almost made subordinate to the reasonings of man, and that too after his reason had pronounced on the Divinity of the Bible? I want you not only to feel the piety, but to see the philosophy of making this question, and all others within the system of

revealed truth, to hinge on the principle of—"Thus saith the Lord." The right logical order is as follows:—Instead of studying the disease alone, and thence predicting what the remedy should be, learn from the mouth of God himself what the remedy is; and then, on studying the disease and remedy together, you will meet with adaptations which evince a still more marvellous wisdom in the economy of grace than you have ever been able to trace in the economy of nature; and that whether you look downward to earth or upwardly to heaven—to man emancipated by the knowledge of his atonement from the bondage of conscious guilt into the light, and love, and liberty of a new creature; or to God shining forth in the face of Christ, in the full lustre of His vindicated attributes, with a mercy free to expatiate over the whole of His sinful creation, yet shrined as it were in the glories of unchanged and unchangeable sacredness—a just God and a Saviour—just while the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

11. We deny not that there lie in the human breast the embryo conceptions of these things, remaining there in a state of dormancy till called forth by the exhibition of their archetypes, when the word that speaketh to us from heaven is re-echoed by earth, just because the truth which cometh from God meets a response and confirmation in the nature that was fashioned by His hands. Yet I would have you to understand of those very conceptions which, when evoked by the Bible from the deep recesses of consciousness, are the effectual witnesses of its divinity, that any attempted forthputting of these anterior to the Bible would but present us with as many crude and formless imaginations. For the men who thus speculate in the *a priori* form are under a delusion, just as the expounders of our natural theology are insensible how much after all they owe to that Scripture over which they claim for their argument a sort of preference or precedency. Even so they who would make the necessity of the atonement a preliminary to the consideration of its evidences, are not aware how much they stand indebted to the revelation of that very atonement for all the plausibilities and seeming triumphs of their goodly reasoning. We fully admit that there is a basis for their argumentation in the human character, and that there the sleeping germs, as it were, of the demonstration are to be found; but it is only at the touch *ab extra* of the doctrine itself, as stated in the Bible, that these germs are evolved or made to effloresce into consequences of any

value. We are delighted with all the coincidences which can be pointed out between the objective truth in the Bible and the state of our subjective human nature; all we contend for is, that both must be submitted to observation, and that only by the study of both we can find out these coincidences. We could not by the study of the one, that is, of human nature alone, find out the other, that is, some special truth or doctrine of the Bible. Let the coincidences or affinities between these two things be what they may, you could not from the first of them discover the second; but, as it is far easier to discern than to discover, let both be placed before you—the remedy in the gospel on the one hand, and the counterpart disease in human nature on the other—then those very affinities which furnished no clue for the discovery of anything might yet be discerned in bright and convincing manifestation. What we want from all this to impress upon you is, that, once the credentials of the Bible are established by the study of its evidences, the contents of the Bible should instantly be sought after. I do not want this book to be waiting, as it were, in the ante-chamber of your mind till you have finished your reckonings with a number of preliminary topics that you have admitted, and are now entertaining as so many visitants in its inner apartment. I should like to see these dismissed in the meantime, in order to make room for the principal witness. I may recall them afterwards; but meanwhile the Bible and they should be made to change places. I do not say they should be dismissed altogether from the science of theology; but they should be dismissed from the precedency which has been too often given to them; nor should one topic be allowed to intervene, one moment be suffered to pass, between the determination of the question, Who the letter comes from? and the instant taking up of the question, What the letter says?

12. The principle which we now labour to expound, if carried into effect, would not only restrain the overgrowth of theology, or save what has been termed the body of divinity from being swollen, deformed, and bloated by a thousand useless and often hurtful excrescences,—it would fix each topic and each argument in its right place; nor can I imagine a wider difference in the spirit and character of any two mental exercises, than that wherewith a theologian constructs his argument on the necessity of the atonement, and that wherewith a humble sinner, labouring under a sense of his sinfulness, and so of the necessity of some great act of reconciliation with God, takes the doctrine

of the atonement as the Bible offers it, and finds it in experience most satisfying and precious to his soul.

13. The conclusion on the whole is, that from the study of the Bible's credentials we should pass forthwith to the study of the Bible's contents, and that without the detention or the delay of any intermediate topic whatever. Some express the sentiment in this way: that Scripture criticism is the basis of theology. This is true; and if I demur at all to the terms in which the truth is propounded, it is because for Scripture criticism, as commonly understood, the profoundest philological skill and the resources of a vast and varied erudition, are by many held to be indispensable. I will not depreciate nor discourage the highest efforts of criticism; and yet I would substitute for the sentence now given forth regarding it the saying—that if I know the sense of all that is in Scripture, I possess all the materials of theology: and then I would affirm that the knowledge of this sense in the great bulk and body of it, is accessible to all—to the moderately learned in Greek and Hebrew through the medium of the original languages, and through the medium of the popular versions to the species at large. This is what we have abundantly enlarged upon in lectures formerly given, to which, in the lecture that follows, we shall subjoin a few additional observations. Scripture criticism, indeed, is the only topic which I think ought to intervene between the study of the Bible's evidences and the study of its contents. The doctrine of man's disease, or the depravity of his nature, can be educed partly from Scripture and partly from observation; the doctrine of God's remedy for the disease, of the atonement rendered by His Son Jesus Christ, is educible from Scripture alone. Scripture criticism, therefore, and more especially as the means for the ascertainment of doctrine, is a most fitting topic to come between the questions, Who the Bible comes from?—and, What the Bible tells? But I should refuse to entertain any other, as for example the origin of heathen sacrifices, ere I proceeded to consider what the Bible tells on the subject of the atonement.

CHAPTER II.

RECAPITULATION OF OUR VIEWS ON SCRIPTURE CRITICISM.

1. In former lectures on this subject, I have stated the reason why we should expect the greatest accuracy of translation in those portions of the Bible which were replete with its most important subject-matter; and why, on the other hand, the chief difficulties and errors lay in those passages, or even in those single expressions, which affected not the leading principles either of Christian faith or Christian practice. This expectation is abundantly confirmed by the testimonies of the soundest and most eminent in Scripture criticism, who generally agree in deponing, that all the main articles in religion, whether of doctrine or morality, are to be found, without change and without mutilation, in the most corrupt popular versions of Christendom; and that, save when the version is executed in part or in whole for a dishonest purpose, or to serve the purposes of a sect, we may commit ourselves with all security to its guidance in everything which concerns our everlasting salvation. This is sufficiently obvious from the comparison of all these versions among themselves, and the harmony which obtains betwixt them in all that is essential—so that had any Protestant Church constructed its system of theology, or its confession, on any one or other of these versions, it would have been made up of precisely the same articles, or held forth to all its members the same identical creed by which it is now distinguished. The same thing is palpable in another way, and without the knowledge on our part of different languages. Take all the English translations, either of the whole Bible or different books of it, and collate them with our authorized version—only excepting those which have been executed for a sectarian purpose, and so of course the version of the Unitarians—and then tell us, if you can, what the doctrinal amount is of all the variations which have been submitted to you. In some you may miss a few proof-passages for one or other of the doctrines, but not so as to expunge these doctrines from Christianity, for there still remains in each translation an

abundant testimony in their favour. In other words, through these different media you look substantially to one and the same Bible, and recognise in each the same orthodoxy, or the same *credenda* and the same *agenda* in all of them.

2. It cannot be denied that the number of variations in these different translated Scriptures is immense, but they must not touch, it would appear, on aught that is essential—either on the *capita fidei* of the gospel, or on the weightier matters of the law. And what is this to say, but that all which is of substantial and practical importance, all which truly appertains to the science and system of theology, has found a safe passage from the original Hebrew or Greek, to our popular version in the hands of our peasantry? Certain matters there are which have suffered an obscuration, perhaps even a change, in their transition from one language to another; but these, it would appear, are not the weightier matters of the law, not the matters or the materials which are employed in constructing from the Bible either a system of faith or a directory of conduct. For instance, whatever sense be given to the word ἀπήγξατο, one of the ἅπαξ λεγόμενα of Scripture, and on the settlement of which it hinges, whether the traitor Judas was hanged or strangled, or precipitated to the ground by a giving way of the rope which suspended him—whichever of these variations you adopt in the manner of his death, not one article of any confession, not one rule of Christian practice, will be in the least affected by it. In like manner there is the word συντρίψασα, on which, as on the former, whole cart-loads of criticism have been accumulated, all of which, though cast into the pit of oblivion, would not soil or minish by one iota the integrity either of the doctrine or ethics of the New Testament; for what is the mighty question that would remain undetermined, what the lesson we should lose by parting with the vast and voluminous erudition of this fierce controversy—whether the phial of spikenard, in the Gospel by Mark, was furnished with a stopper, or had to be broken ere its contents could be discharged on the head of our Saviour? And so of another famous scriptural enigma, respecting the power which the women in churches ought to have upon their heads because of the angels. I undervalue not the labour which can rectify so much as a single letter, or cast the slightest illustration over any one passage of the Bible; but with all deference to the pretensions and the powers of Scripture criticism, I may be permitted to rejoice, that by the general consent of its most profound and

accomplished scholars, the whole sense and meaning of Scripture, so far as essential to salvation, has passed uninjured from the first penmen of the inspired record, to the vernacular language of every country in Christendom. It delights me to find, that all of Scripture truth which is of effect to medicate and enlarge the soul, or make it meet for heaven, like any of the cheap or common bounties of nature, is accessible to every one—not monopolized, as an unfeeling pedantry would have it, by a select few, who hold exclusive possession of the only cipher which unlocks the treasures of revelation, but brought by the help, not of a rare and difficult, but of a very ordinary and everyday scholarship—brought within the ken even of the humblest of our common people. There are depths and recesses in Scripture criticism which have only been explored by linguists and philologists of the first order; and the biblical curiosities which they have fetched up, are worthy of a place in the cabinet of the student, or in what may be termed the museums of theology. I say nothing to intercept or to mar this enjoyment; and so far from discouraging the labours of these collectors, I trust they will persevere till every conquerable difficulty shall be unriddled, and so long as any further approximation can be made to the immaculate edition that will form a perfect exemplar of the words, to the faultless, the unexceptionable version that will form as perfect an exemplar of the mind and meaning of the Bible. Yet with all the complacency I feel in the progress of these lucubrations, I confess a thousand-fold higher complacency in the cheering thought, that through the medium of the English version as it stands, with all its errors and all its susceptibilities of improvement, the light of saving knowledge can be poured forth so clearly and abundantly throughout the families of our land, that all the critics and lexicographers of all of our universities can make no sensible addition either to its brilliancy or to its fulness. To me the intolerable thing is that haughty and heartless scholarship which would feel a pleasure in disowning this, or rather would not feel most triumphant satisfaction in the thought of our species—even to the most sunken in want and drudgery—being so richly aud so largely provided for. It is well to be told of the Polyglots and Thesauruses, and other elaborate compends and digests of biblical lore, in the preparation of which the lives and labours of our mightiest men, whether on the field of controversy or in the high places of a recondite and lofty erudition, have been expended. But is it

not also well to be told that in the Bible, the current and familiar Bible, used in every village school, and a universal inmate or companion in the tenements of our peasantry—that in this book, not the truth only, but the whole truth which is unto salvation, without adulteration, without change, without defect, for not one particle of essential doctrine or duty is there wanting—that thence the light, which is the life of men, shines in the eyes of a pious cottage family, with a lustre which no learning can either enhance or extinguish ; and, in a word, that the real subject-matter of Christianity is placed before them so entire and so unimpaired by the transitions which it has undergone, in the lapse of centuries from one country and from one language to another, that all the truths and all the treasures of immortality are their own.

3. Such are the precious consequences of a very obvious principle, scarcely if at all adverted to by the disciples of theological science. I am for laying no discountenance whatever, but the opposite, on the very highest learning in the languages —so that indefinite approximations might be made to an identity the most rigorous and precise, between the sense of the translated and the sense of the original Scriptures. But I would have you to understand, that, long before this perfection is gained, and by dint of a greatly lower learning, even that learning which executed the popular versions of Christendom —the whole sense and staple of theology, both the preceptive and the dogmatical, have already been appropriated, and rendered faithfully and truly into the vernacular tongues. And I trust that this is no longer inexplicable after the statements and views we have already laid before you. The ducts of conveyance, by which all that is of weight and magnitude in the subject-matter of the Bible is transferred from the original to the translated Scriptures, are large enough and palpable enough for enabling an ordinary guide to make good a right and a safe passage from the one to the other. But many are the minuter things of Scripture, the conveyance of which from the original to the vernacular languages, as if effected through capillary or microscopic tubes, requires the nicety and discernment and skill of a higher and more accomplished order of conductors. And thus it is, that while all things of significancy and moment have travelled undamaged and undiminished from Greek and Hebrew into English, many are—I will not say the unprofitable things, for all Scripture is profitable—but many are the things

of inferior consideration which have suffered in their more hazardous, more critical journey from one language to another, and now stand before us in the Bible of our own tongue, distorted, it may be, from the shape and lineaments which they originally had, or with at least a shade of doubtfulness and uncertainty over them. In other words, the veil of an unknown tongue is now removed from all the more important passages of Scripture, and only remains as an intercepting screen against the view of the unskilled in other languages than their own, on the less important. Hence we infer—and to me the inference is a most delightful and glorious one—that the sayings of the first class are alike open to the learned and to the unlearned; and that from the unlearned are only hidden, or lie in a hazy obscuration the sayings of the second class. But remember it is from the first class of sayings, that systematic theology draws all its proofs and all its materials. This lets us in at once to the secret of that undoubted phenomenon—the immense judgment and sagacity of an ordinary Scotch peasant, whose father and grandfather have handed down to him unbroken the good old habit of a former generation, when the works of Guthrie, and Halyburton, and Boston, and Flavel, and the two Erskines, along with a store of well-read Bibles, were to be found in all the cottages; the judgment, we say, and clear apprehension of unlettered labourers in all the ingredient parts of the scheme of orthodoxy, or in all that was of sufficient magnitude to the subject-matter of any theological proposition, or to form part and parcel of the science. In counterpart to this we have the equally undoubted phenomenon of a meagre, superficial, defective theology, on the part of our most accomplished and erudite philologists—as if they had expended themselves on the laborious niceties and *nugae* which call more especially for the exercise of their profession; and no strength remained with them for the grasp or comprehension of those great generalities which stand forth objectively in the oracles of God, or of those alike great applications which relate them to the subjective wants of our moral nature. We have fallen in with ploughmen and mechanics in our own land, who of course knew nothing of the first vocables of inspiration, but who, on the substance of its doctrines or its lessons, far surpassed, in the depth and enlargement of their views, the most erudite Biblists in Germany, or even many the most accomplished for the treatment of textual difficulties in our sister kingdom. The best critics are not always, I could almost

say not generally, the soundest and ablest theologians. The best theologians, as President Edwards, are not always the most expert and skilful and full of scholarship in the walk of philological criticism—or of that criticism which seeks for the meaning of recondite texts in the original languages of the Old and New Testaments.

4. Perhaps I labour more than is necessary for the conveyance of what I want to impress upon you. Once for all, let me illustrate it by a distinction on which I shall proceed afterwards, when presenting you with the Scripture proofs of any given doctrine. Let me have you, then, to distinguish between that part of Scripture criticism which deals with the Bible simply and generally as a book, and that part of Scripture criticism which deals with the Bible especially as a translated book. In the one way, you explore the Bible, our own vernacular Bible, I mean, just as you would any other book in the English language, for the purpose of fixing and ascertaining by the comparison of passage with passage, and of argument with argument, the whole sense and scope of its author. Now, recollect that, if I have made out my position that all the materials which are of sufficient importance to be admitted into the structure and composition of the theological system have passed uninjured into our English translation, then in the building up of that system, you may with all safety and profit confine yourself to the use of that translation, and of that only. You may have to traverse in every direction, so as to search out thoroughly in all its parts and passages, the book; but you need not go beyond it, no not even to the Hebrew Old or the Greek New Testament. This announcement may somewhat startle you; and I shall have more to say in order to complete my explanation. But meanwhile let me repeat, that if the Bible sayings which enunciate aught that is either in the doctrinal or ethical system of Christianity be accurately rendered into our own English from the original languages, why go beyond these sayings—the sayings, we mean, of the English Bible—in the act of rearing that system from the various utterances of a book, which, as is admitted by all our best and soundest proficients in sacred lore, do fully and accurately represent the corresponding utterances given forth, when the books of Scripture were first written, in the very vocables of inspiration. It is on the event of their mistranslation that there is a call and a necessity for falling back on the original Scriptures. And in what passages of the Bible is it

that we are exposed to this necessity? Not—by the testimony of every honest translation, and of all the Polyglots—not in the passages which have to do with the subject-matter of divinity at all; but in the passages charged with certain points and circumstantials, which, be they settled as they may, do not so much as loosen one stone, or even detach one particle of cement from the goodly fabric of our actual and present orthodoxy. It is here that we lie exposed to the risk of careless, and sometimes of difficult, and so of erroneous translation; and then it is that the most arduous and recondite philology is put on its extreme resources. In other words, when in search of substantial elements, keep if you like by the study of your English Bibles. When in search of curiosities, take the original Scriptures into your hands, and avail yourselves of all the light which the Hellenisms, and the Hebraisms, and the Rabbinisms, and all the peculiarities of all the cognate languages, can possibly throw upon it. Or, to express it differently, the Scripture criticism which fixes and ascertains the great principles of Bible instruction, may do so effectually, though it only deals with the Bible as a book. The Scripture criticism which fixes and ascertains the minuter points of Bible information will have to deal with the Bible as a translated book. And let it not be imagined, that because the latter can only be the exercise of the few, and the former the exercise of the many—that therefore in this first and far most important walk of Scripture criticism, there is not room for the highest efforts of human sagacity. Edwards has demonstrated the contrary in the admirable specimens which he has given, when he handles the Bible as a book only, in some of his chapters on original sin. I want you to know, that with the English version in your hands, all the doctrinal and all the moral wealth of God's revelations have thereby come not into your possession only, but into full possession of the whole population in these realms. I want to deliver them from the imagination that there exists the barrier of an unknown tongue between their minds and one single truth, which can in the least contribute either to their present or their immortal wellbeing. I want to tear asunder that hieroglyphic veil wherewith the Egyptian priesthood of old kept the profane vulgar at an impracticable distance from them and from their mysteries. I am for no such veil between our priesthood and our population; but am for breaking down this wretched monopoly, and hereby do pronounce my utter deprecation and scorn on the unfeeling pedantry

of those who would uphold it. It is their vocation to hold up their tiny lustres which might guide the inquirer's way among the arcana and through the by-paths of sacred literature. Let them not think to cast obscuration on the glories of that noon-day light which shines on the great truths of Christianity, patent to all eyes, and the belief of which is for the healing of the nations.

5. But it may well be asked, if the English Bible would suffice for the argumentative establishment of every article in divinity, how is it that in every argumentative treatise upon any such article, there is almost an invariable appeal to the original Scriptures? Is not the principle on which I have now expatiated contradicted by the practice of all learned theologians? And was there ever a full exposition given of any dogma in the orthodox system that was not garnished all over with quotations in Greek and Hebrew characters?—proving, by universal consent, a necessity from some cause of passing upward from the truth as set before us in our own vernacular tongue, to the truth as given to the world at the first, couched in the vocables of inspiration.

6. All we contend for is, that the doctrine, in its modern investiture, is substantially the same with the doctrine in its ancient and primitive investiture; notwithstanding which, we admit that in the discussion of it, there is a necessity from some cause for our incessant reference from the translated to the original Scriptures; and the cause is this, that the adversaries of the doctrine put their sense on the passages, both in the Greek and Hebrew, as well as in the English; and we, in vindicating our sense, must follow this movement, and try to exterminate the mischief in every quarter where mischief has arisen. We must make our appearance, too, at the very same place to which our enemies have chosen to carry their warfare; and this harmonizes with all the former testimonies which I have ever been in the habit of giving to the immense worth and importance of Scripture criticism—even in that function which it exercises when it details with the Bible, not as a book, but as a translated book. I have never had much respect for *this* Scripture criticism as an instrument of discovery; but I have all along had the utmost respect for it as an instrument of defence. It will never, I think, materially extend truth; but it will put down error. It performs a mighty service, if it extinguish heresy, and keep heretics in order. But I trust you perceive the perfect

keeping or consistency which there is between all these admissions on the one hand, and our strenuous assertion on the other, of the sufficiency of the English Bible. We must accept the challenge of our antagonists, and go forth against them to the battle, at the spot where they have fixed their entrenchments and hung out their flag of defence—whether it be on the arena of the Hebrew Old, or of the Greek New Testament. But should, as the upshot of every conflict—and for this we have one continuous testimony from all our best philologists and critics—the undoubted faithfulness of our English version be established, in such essential matters as the *capita fidei* and weightier matters of the law—what is this to say but that the English translation is a safe and sufficient authority for the determination both of the articles of the Christian faith and the rules of the Christian morality? If gainsayers will strike in, and force us to treat the subject controversially, then should they gainsay in Greek, we must meet them in Greek; or should they gainsay in Hebrew, we must meet them in Hebrew. Nevertheless it remains a stable and unaffected proposition, that but for them we might have kept by our own authorized version, and landed in the identical dogmata and duties, which, after having stood the ordeal of a thousand controversies, still retain the place which they have had for centuries in the directory and creed of all the reformed Churches in Christendom. We are indebted, vitally indebted, to the championship of our men of war, in that they have warded off the invasion of heresy from our borders. But still the most precious service which they have rendered by their mastery and skill in the original languages is, that they have inspired a just and warrantable confidence in the popular version on the part of those who know no other language than their own. And apart from controversy, or when the object is not to vindicate but simply to acquire, it is delightful to think, that, if in possession of our common Bible, the materials for a right and sound conclusion are within the reach of all; and that in the hands of every intelligent Englishman, unskilled though he should be in every other tongue, there is enough for guiding him onward to all that is worth in theology. He is fully competent to the investigations of the *theologia didactica* by means of a Scripture criticism on the Bible as a book, though not competent by Scripture criticism on the Bible as a translated book, to the work and the warfare of the *theologia elenctica.*

7. There is a profound and important remark of a writer quoted by Dugald Stewart, of which we meet with frequent and most striking verification in theology. "The science of abstruse learning," he says, "I consider in the same light with the ingenious writer who compared it to Achilles' spear, that heals the wound that it had made before. It serves to repair the damage itself had occasioned, and this perhaps is all it is good for. It casts no additional light on the paths of life; but disperses the clouds with which it had overspread them before. It advances not the traveller one step on his journey, but conducts him back again to the spot from which he had wandered." The perverse subtleties of the schoolmen misled the world from the path of experimental inquiry, and called forth the *Novum Organum* of Bacon; and now that men have been effectually told of the way to get knowledge—that it is to look at what is visible, and listen to what is audible, and measure what is extended, and weigh what is ponderous, and hold converse with the various objects of nature by those respective senses which form the only inlets for our acquaintance with them;—now that these obvious methods of simplicity and common sense are again entered upon, both the perversity and its corrective may be alike forgotten. Even had it required the counteractive metaphysics of Reid and Beattie to restore our confidence in the strong and instinctive perceptions of nature, surely now both the one and the other metaphysics may be equally disregarded; and without disturbance from the illusions of scepticism, may we go forth with vigour in the business of common life, or on the business of all the sciences. But, coming back to our own subject, and to that special part of it which now engages our attention, even Scripture criticism—the Biblists of Germany thought to unsettle all our received orthodoxy by the exploration of ancient manuscripts, and the multitude of various readings conjured up from the cells and various readings of the Middle Ages. But they were followed in this laborious scrutiny by the champions of a better faith, who demonstrated not the unexcepted, but the substantial integrity even of our most corrupt editions, and put all right again. And the attempt thus made upon the readings was also made upon the renderings of Scripture; and men of Greek, and Hebrew, and Samaritan, and Ethiopic, and Talmudic, and Arabic, and Rabbinical lore, alarmed, by their novel interpretations, the simple-minded Christians, who feared that the truth of the gospel, and all the precious comforts of the doctrine of grace,

were to be taken away from them. But they have been tracked into all their walks and all their windings—and that by men able to equal, nay, to overmatch them, who have made as large and larger excursions than themselves; and who have dispelled the illusions, disarming them of their wizard power, and who by a learning alike transcendental with theirs, but on the side of truth, have, as with the rod of Aaron, swallowed up the rods of all these magicians;—and, glorious consummation, have demonstrated the substantial integrity in everything of moment, of all the national versions in Christendom. And throwing the mantle of their protection over the popular faith, have irresistibly shown that by the Bible—we mean the plain everyday vernacular Bible of our cottages and schools—the truth as it is in Jesus has been placed within the comprehension and reach even of little children.

8. I do hope that you recognise the perfect consistency of all this with the recommendation which I now offer of your studies and daily exercise in the original languages of Scripture. Remember that you are not only the propounders of the faith, you are the defenders of the faith; and while your chief business, or rather the great, if not only business of the many, is to hold converse in English with those who are within the vineyard, it should be the chief, if not only business of a few, to sit on the watch-towers of our Zion, and be qualified for holding converse in Greek and Hebrew, and all cognate languages, with adversaries of all tongues and all possible designations who are without. Every Church, whilst on earth a Church militant, should have its Horsleys, and Wetsteins, and Pooles, and Mills, and Michaelises, and Griesbachs; and to prove that we are not altogether destitute, such men as our own Dr. Campbell. On the one hand, there ought to be a few accomplished for deeds of highest prowess, for works of first-rate authorship on the field of controversy. But on the other hand, there ought to be the many, and these a lettered and well-educated clergy, who value and know how to estimate the soundest and ablest demonstrations of Scripture criticism which might issue from the press. Let it never be imagined that I intend the least discountenance on this noble work of erudition: all my testimonies and all my wishes have been in the opposite direction. Only grant me the sufficiency of the English Bible for indoctrinating, and that most correctly and fully, our general population, and there does not remain even the semblance of an exception in my mind against

the most intense philological, and critical, and antiquarian study of the Bible on the part of as many of our ecclesiastics as feel the stirrings within them of a peculiar aptitude and taste for this branch of professional learning. Apart from our indispensable need of it for fighting the battles of the faith, it has of itself many claims and many recommendations. The rectification of a single verse, the solution of but one scriptural enigma, the settlement even of the most minutely statistical question, on the manners and peculiarities of these bygone times of sacred history—all these, however unnecessary for the establishment of any article of faith, should be prized and rejoiced in, and have a place assigned to them among the choice treasures of our profession. And without analyzing at present the effect into its causes, which I at the same time think can most satisfactorily be done, I promise you, as the result of your frequent converse and great familiarity with Scripture in its original languages, not of course a different view, but a certain peculiar and often more powerful impression of its subject-matter than in your cursory perusal of the English Bible you have ever been able to realize. It is a good thing occasionally to contemplate the same substantial truth in a different investiture from that wherein we have been in the habit of regarding it; and never can we expect a larger share of benefit from the influence of such a cause, than when we read God's message as it was first enunciated to the world. And though most frequently we look at the things of faith as presented to us in our own tongue, we shall not miss a real practical good by looking at them, though identically the same things, couched in the *ipsissima verba*, the very vocables of inspiration.

9. Without probing into the causes of the phenomenon, that we attain a more vivid sense of the subject-matter when we read of it in another than in our own vernacular tongue, we may at least appeal to your experience of the truth of it. Whether it be a French, or a Latin, or a Greek New Testament, we have often felt as if we had caught a more impressive view of the themes or archetypes when we held converse with them through these different media—other types, as it were, or other representations of thought than those in which we most frequently and most habitually regard them. It would seem as if the thinking principle were almost asleep—lulled into acquiescence from our very familiarity with the well-known sounds and phrases of our

English Bibles—when we prosecute our daily task of a daily chapter or exercise in the word of God; and so we feel satisfied, though only holding converse with the symbols of thought, that we are holding converse with the objects of thought—just as in Algebra, we are but dealing with the signs, while the *ipsa corpora*, the realities of which these signs are but the indices, are not at all present to our thoughts. We feel as if we ceased to be nominalists in theology when, holding intercourse with any of its lessons in a different from our customary language, there is a necessity for taking cognizance of meanings as well as words; and so are brought into close, strenuous, effective contact, not with the λεγόμενα alone, but with the νοήματα of Scripture. Let me therefore reiterate my advice that you make a pocket-companion of the Greek Testament. I promise you new, unexpected, and most satisfying glimpses, perhaps never before experienced, of the most precious truths in revelation. You will learn more fully than before how much its most essential doctrines are interwoven throughout the whole of Scripture; and just as on meeting with a much-valued friend in an unusual place, the cordiality is whetted by the surprise; so it is when—overlooked before in routine and cursory perusals of your vernacular Bible—there peer forth the notices of that very truth which you most value, and most rejoice in. I do not say but that with your attention all awake upon the English version, the same benefit may not be realized; and yet I am persuaded, not only that you will swell the number of proof-passages for the various articles of your faith, by a constant perusal of the original Scriptures, but that, in particular, when you read in the Greek Septuagint of the προσφορὰ of the law, and read of the great προσφορὰ in the New Testament, which was once offered to bear the sins of many, you will receive an augmented impression of the great truth, that Jesus Christ is the pervading theme of the law and the prophets, as well as of the gospel; and that the reception of Him as the Lord our righteousness, is the turning-point of a sinner's salvation.

CHAPTER III.

SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE FOR THE ATONEMENT.

1. Were I to deliver an introductory lecture on Biblical criticism, I should begin perhaps with the meanings of individual words, and one of my earliest remarks would be on the uncertain guidance of etymology, or how frequently and widely the actual deviated from the primitive signification. Under this head we might have exposed the folly of a certain style of pedagogical criticism, when it condemns, for example, the use of mixed metaphors, seeing that the metaphorical, like other first meanings, is lost in the course of those changes which a language undergoes; and so what was originally a figurative becomes at length a direct and proper signification. We have no time, however, for such stray excursions; nor can we enter at all on that very delightful though not very safe region of speculation, into which Horne Tooke first led the way, by the most ingenious and entertaining treatment which he bestows on the first elements of speech, in his book entitled "The Diversions of Purley." When the word which I do investigate affords a specimen of any principle, I may announce that principle without farther dwelling on it; and, accordingly, what I have now said of the little avail of etymology in fixing the sense of terms was suggested by the first word that I shall consider in connexion with the doctrine of the atonement, the word καταλλαγή, 2 Cor. v. 18. It comes from the verb ἀλλάσσω, *to change, to make other than before.* We instantly recognise, as of the same family, ἄλλος, *other*, and ἀλλὰ, *but.* The verb καταλλάσσω is even employed to denote the exchange of money for commodities, effected by the money passing into other hands than before. The guidance of etymology were, however, very uncertain here. It might tell us of change in the general, but not of the special change. We know it to be a change from displeasure into favour; but for aught that etymology can tell, it may have been the reverse change, from friendship to enmity—such as the mind of Cain experienced when he looked to his brother with an altered countenance. But when abandoned by the lights of etymology, we have another light, the sufficiency of which, above that of all others, I want to impress upon you—I mean the light of the

context. That the change is from enmity to friendship, even though we did not know from this being its universal meaning, we could have inferred, in this instance, from the passage itself. It is a change in God's mind towards the world in not now imputing unto them their trespasses; or in the world's mind towards God, when it passes from the alienation of guilt to the grateful and confiding sense of pardon and reconciliation. And apart from the contextual, our doctrinal light, the general knowledge we had of the subject-matter, the information of another Bible passage, that if we believe not in Christ, the wrath of God abideth on us—this alone would have fixed the direction of that change which is expressed by *καταλλαγή*. Doubtless we already know that, I believe without exception, in all authors it means a change from enmity to friendship. Still our information that this is the meaning in all instances, is an information gathered by us from all the contexts. The only other Scripture I shall give for this at present is 1 Cor. vii. 11.

2. The question has been often discussed whether reconciliation applies to the offended or the offending party. We believe that generally among Greek authors it is applied to the former; but though this is the most frequent application of it too in our own language, yet is it often made alike applicable to both. We should say to the offended party—We beg you to cease from your anger, and be reconciled to him who is the object of it. But ere the reconciliation can be effected, it must be mutual; and therefore we should also say to the offender—Be reconciled with him to whom the offence has been given, or cease from giving cause of offence any further, and enter into the friendship which he offers to you upon his own terms. Which of these applications be meant in any given passage can, at all times, we believe, be decided by the context and the circumstances. Critics have elaborately endeavoured to show, that by the usages of the Hebrew language, and thence of the Hellenistic Greek, the word "reconciliation" should be applied to the offending party, and this from the reciprocal form of the Hebrew verb, which requires that, in order to the reconciliation, the offending party should reconcile himself to the offended by doing what might appease his anger. It is quite in point to allege 1 Sam. xxix. 4, which, in the Septuagint, reads thus—'Εν *τίνι διαλλαγήσεται τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ, wherewith should he reconcile himself?* or, if translated from the Septuagint, *wherewith shall he be reconciled to his master?* This is a clear instance of a reconciliation

to be effected not by the offended but by the other party—not of David removing his own anger against his master, but of David removing his master's anger against him. But, as I said before, I do think that the context in every Scripture I know will decide which of the parties it is on whom this work of reconciliation is laid, without any critical discussion either upon single words or upon the tenses and forms of these words. Rom. v. 10—"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Here we, the sinners or offenders, are said to be reconciled—yet who does not see that because the offended Lawgiver had been reconciled to or made propitious to us by the death of His Son, the very next verse, where we are said to receive the atonement or reconciliation (καταλλαγὴ), implies not that we conferred our friendship upon God, but that God conferred His friendship upon us; and we are reconciled on taking the reconciliation at His hands, on the terms in which He is pleased to offer it? Rom. xi. 15—"For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Neither is there aught in this verse to cast obscurity on the respective parts which each had to sustain for the making up of that controversy which obtained between God and the world. 2 Cor. v. 18-20—"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, Be ye reconciled to God." There seems as little ambiguity, or rather the utmost distinctness, both as regards a reconciling God and a reconciled world. That God was the offended party, is manifest from the clause which tells us how the reconciliation was effected on His part—that is, by ceasing from his anger, and so not imputing their trespasses unto them. But the reconciliation, though thus begun, is not completed without the concurrence of the other party; and so the exhortation of καταλλάγητε is brought to bear upon them; and they are called upon to be reconciled unto God, which is done by their believing in Christ, whereupon the enmity in their hearts towards God is done away. This discussion respecting which of the parties it is that, upon

an agreement taking place between them, might be said to be reconciled the one to the other, appears to be wholly useless and uncalled for. That the reconciliation be perfected, it must be mutual; and there is an equal propriety in speaking of God as reconciled to men, and of men as reconciled to God. Eph. ii. 16—"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." Here Christ is represented as reconciling both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God—the effect of which is, that God, the offended, is reconciled unto them, and they, the offenders, are reconciled unto God. In the parallel passage, Col. i. 20, 21, God is represented as the reconciler through Christ, and of course the believers, whom the apostle is addressing, as the reconciled. In the other two places where the word occurs, they are both human parties between whom the reconciliation had to be made: Matt. v. 24, where it is the offender that is bidden be reconciled to him who had something against him, some injury which he could allege as a ground of quarrel, and by the removal of which ground it was, that he, the offender, was charged with the office of making out a reconciliation. 1 Cor. vii. 11—"But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." Here I feel compelled to side with the Socinians in regarding the woman who is bidden in this verse be reconciled to her husband, as the offended party, and who, in virtue of that offence, had of her own accord departed from him. We feel this to be no concession whatever, regarding, as we do, the whole controversy about this matter as immaterial to the question of Christ's expiatory death—a doctrine clearly affirmed in some of the verses now quoted, and thus irrespective of the idle discussion that we have prosecuted too long on this matter of determining on which of the parties in a quarrel it is that the work of reconciliation is properly devolved, or which of them it is that we should call upon to be reconciled to the other. It might devolve upon either, and so there are lexicographers who tell us that διαλλάσσω, the word employed in Matt. v. 24, implies a mutual reconciliation.

3. The truth is, that but for the Socinian artifice of fastening the work of reconciliation exclusively on man, and thus to get rid of the propitiation by which God is reconciled to the guilty, this subject of debate might never have been heard of; and I certainly think it might have been better disposed of than it has been done even by the orthodox. It should not have been

made to turn on the meaning of the word taken singly; and more especially as the meanings, or at least the applications, so obviously differ, while severally each might be determined by the context in which it lies imbedded.

4. You will therefore not think it strange if, when labouring along with you to fix and ascertain the meaning of words, I take you, as the likeliest method for accomplishing your object, to the passages where they actually occur; and, as every book is its own best interpreter, be assured, that by much the fullest and most satisfying light on this inquiry is to had from Bible passages. Let us again revert to Rom. v. 10 and v. 11,—"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." The latter is worthy of particular notice from the translation which it has received at the hands of the authors of our own version—"atonement." It should have been "reconciliation;" and perhaps the best account or vindication of the rendering is, that in those days the translators had not lost sight so completely as we have done of the original meaning, according to Dr. Magee, of this word—*at-one-ment*, or the bringing of parties before at variance into one. Now this is reconciliation itself, and not atonement as we now understand it, being the price given, whether in the way of recompense or suffering, for the healing of a breach. This is the meaning that we actually affix to the word atonement; and reconciliation is not the thing itself, but the fruit thereof. It were interesting to know what other words in the original correspond to the word atonement in our translation; and for this purpose I would like you to examine the following verses both in the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek Septuagint:—Ex. xxix. 33; xxix. 36; xxix. 37; xxx. 10; xxx. 15; Lev. xvii. 11; Ex. xxxii. 30; Lev. i. 4; iv. 20; iv. 26; iv. 31; iv. 35; v. 6; vi. 7; xii. 8; xiv. 18; Num. xv. 25; Lev. xxiii. 27, 28; Num. viii. 21; xxviii. 22; xxix. 5; 2 Sam. xxi. 3; 2 Chron. xxix. 24; Neh. x. 33. I have not nearly presented you with all the passages in the Old Testament where the word "atonement" occurs in our English translation. But in the vast majority of these the radical word, we mean in the Septuagint, is ἐξιλάσκομαι, *to make propitious.* In one or two instances the radical is καθαρίζω, signifying *to purify, to cleanse from guilt.* In one instance, ἁγιάζω, *to sepa-*

rate, or *set apart*, marking the detachment or deliverance of a person from some great and general evil—as from a world lying under condemnation, and then it is deliverance from guilt; or from a world lying in wickedness, and then it is deliverance from the pollution and power of sin, and then it is the same in effect with καθαρισμὸς, when employed to denote a personal or moral purification. Yet does this latter word often express a ritual or judicial absolution from guilt; and accordingly it forms the other Greek translation in the Septuagint, corresponding to our atonement in the English version.

5. Now, in all these instances, the word, though translated atonement, presents us with but the resulting benefit of the atonement, rather than with what we understand by the atonement itself. I am told of but the effect, not of what was done, or suffered, or paid for the purpose of bringing about the effect. Even the word atonement, if originally at-one-ment, is expressive only of the effect—not of that which purchased the reconciliation, but the reconciliation itself. Now, it is not the atonement in this sense, but what in Exodus is called the atonement-money, (xxx. 16,) that I am in quest of—*Keseph é Kopherim*. We must not seek for the evidence of our doctrine in the single word atonement, which, though now by frequent association bound up in our minds with the price of our restoration to peace with God, yet, even in English, signified the restoration itself—the thing pardoned, and not the purchase-money; and, going back to the counterpart words in the original Scriptures, we still find nothing but the final result of a certain great transaction, not the character or nature of the transaction itself—as καταλλαγὴ, *reconciliation*, not what effected the reconciliation; or the derivatives of ἱλάσκομαι, representing God as purified or pleased with us, not what that was which averted His displeasure; or the derivatives of καθαρίζω, telling us of a consequent deliverance from guilt, but not yet telling us from what cause or antecedent the consequent has sprung. Or going to the Hebrew, we read of *kepher* over against "atonement"—still however an effect, the effect of our sins being covered, in virtue it may be of a something respecting which however we have more to learn than what the single word "Kepher" can teach us. Even the Hebrew word, *Heta*, signifying to sin, but in the form Pihel, to cleanse from sin, and translated in 2 Chron. xxix. 24, to make reconciliation, gives of itself but the result, and not that which had the causal influence

in bringing on the result. In short, we shall not extricate the secret we are in quest of by probing for it into single words, which have been discussed, disputed, and subjected to all sorts of torture and inquisition in the crucibles of the philologic laboratory—or under the treatment of the analyst, not of substances, but of terms. You will find the evidence for it in the passage where the word occurs, not singly or individually in the word itself—you will find it, not in any philological light struck out from a single term, but in the contextual light which shines in the plain utterances of a very plain narrative or description.

6. There is one word, however, in Greek, which has more of the virtue in it taken singly than any yet specified, to establish the fact that our forgiveness is a return for a something done, or suffered, or paid; or a thing granted to mankind in consideration of a price, or in exchange for an equivalent rendered by a party distinct from Him who is the party offended—in short, that ours is not a simply bestowed, but a purchased forgiveness. The word to which I advert, and that chiefly for the sake of the family which springs from it, is λύω, *to loose*. Hence λύτρον, a word restricted to signify a ransom—as for instance, this being its primary application, the price paid to loose a captive from his bonds. When it is said that Christ gave Himself a propitiation for our sins, this tells me only that the effect of His doing so was to make God propitious to us: or that He gave Himself to purify us, this is still an effect, that of our deliverance from the guilt and pollution of sin. But when told that He gave Himself a ransom, I learn more from that word singly, than I do from either of the other words singly. I learn that His life was the PRICE of our deliverance. The death by which His life was given up is characterized in itself, and not merely in its effects. It is that by which our release from condemnation has been purchased; and without going further, I see a direct evidence of its being the consideration on which we are let go from the penal consequences of sin in the following verses, Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45. Then there is λυτρόω, exemplified in the following verses, Titus ii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. It is true that the meaning is extended, as almost constantly happens in language, from the primary and specific application which it had at first, of delivery by payment of a price, to delivery in the general, as in Luke xxiv. 21. The Socinians seize upon such instances; but they are of no conceivable avail against those other instances

where the thing given in price is expressly mentioned, as in the two instances immediately preceding; and where in the two instances before these, what is thus given is expressly named λύτρον, which means a *price* or *ransom*, and means it universally. I will therefore give up, not so much as uncertain, but as unneeded, the evidence which lies in Luke i. 68; ii. 38, (λύτρωσις,) and will now present you with one or two specimens from the Septuagint, Lev. xxv. 24-51, (*Galé*,) thus expressed in a case of simple redemption, or buying back. But it is interesting to observe, how the same Greek λύτρον is made the counterpart also to the Hebrew *Kepher*—generally translated "atonement," and proving that the ideas of redemption from debt or other calamity, and atonement from guilt, are interchangeable. Numb. xxxv. 31, 32, (*Kepher.*) There cannot be a more decisive verse for fixing *Kepher* as being indeed a λύτρον, and its not being a *lutron* for the payment of debt or release from mere calamity, but release from the penal consequences of guilt. In this verse, the *Kepher* indisputably means what, had the satisfaction been the life of another given for the life of a murderer, we now generally understand by atonement. I bid you remark here how instantly we obtain the light of an explanation from the context.

7. So much in fact does the main force of the evidence on this subject lie in the context of the places where the single words we have now specified occur, that I must now go back upon them, and present you with the passages in which they lie imbedded; and where, if they do not speak for themselves, their immediate neighbours, if I may so put it, speak most decisively for them. The word λύτρον, I think, does speak for itself—though even here it obtains great authority from the consentaneous testimony of those who are standing beside it. But let me now give you the specimens.

8. Καταλλαγὴ, 2 Cor. v. 18-20.—No doubt reconciliation is but the effect of what was done, and not the deed itself. But take the whole passage; and you find it was done by Jesus Christ; and that in virtue of what He did, God did not reckon with the world for its trespasses—did not lay these trespasses to its account—made no charge against it because of them—treated it as free of all charge because of them. The precise thing which Jesus Christ did to bring all this about, is very decisively told in two or three verses further on. He submitted Himself to the treatment of a sinner. "He became sin for us, though

He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

9. Rom. v. 11.—This, too, is καταλλαγή, the effect of the transaction—and not in itself announcing, as λύτρον does, the character of the transaction. Well, but the effect of what? That whereof it is the effect is very clearly made known to us in the two verses immediately preceding. "We were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." "We are justified by his blood." It may be asked, but where is the evidence here that it was by the death or blood of Christ suffering as a substituted victim in our stead? We reply, that the whole character of a transaction may not be made the subject of repeated description in every passage where we meet with the intimation of it. But have these objectors already forgotten what was said in the former passage of Christ being made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God? When was any witness ever expected, as the Bible is often required to do at the hands of its tormenting inquisitors, to bring forth the whole subject-matter of any one of its testimonies, in every one place where that subject-matter is introduced or referred to?

10. Ἱλάσκεσθαι, Heb. ii. 17, "To make reconciliation for the sins of the people," is the same as to avert the displeasure incurred by the sins of the people,—not expressive of the nature, but the effect of Christ's service. By what He did, God, before offended because of our sins, was made propitious to us. Such was the effect of His agency. But what was the kind or character of that agency? Let us gather up the light of the context for our reply to this question. It was the agency of a High Priest. It was in this character that He officiated when He made reconciliation for the sins of the people. This carries us back to the functions of the Jewish high priest—the very essence of whose office as a reconciler it was—on the great day of atonement, to enter with the blood of slain victims into the Holy of holies; and so Christ through His own death (Heb. ix. 14), Himself being the victim, entered (Heb. ix. 12) not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with His own blood, into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The evidence does not lie exclusively in the word, but in the light which falls upon it from the confines of the illuminated region in the midst of which it is placed—a light that grows and gathers along the way through which we are conducted, by the link of a common topic presented to us in a common expression from

one part of the Bible to another.—Ἱλασμὸς, the abstract for the concrete; not Ἱλάστης, *propitiator*, but Ἱλασμὸς, *propitiation*, 1 John iv. 10. From this verse we learn that Christ made God propitious to us. It does not here say by His death,—that we learn elsewhere. We may well think that the information is given here too, because now we are fully warranted to associate the idea of sacrifice with the very term of propitiation. We have good ground for so associating it—and that from the countless number of informations to this effect scattered over the whole Bible. But let these informations speak for themselves. It is their plain meaning, couched in the terms of a very plain narrative, which gives the jet and substance of the evidence, and not the single word Ἱλασμὸς, by which, in its general sense, we learn, that somehow or other, God was rendered placable through Christ, in virtue of a something done by Him, which at the same time had a special bearing on our sins—"a propitiation for our sins"—by which last cause, no doubt, a nearer approximation is made to the idea of a sacrifice than if Christ had barely been said to have been made a propitation.

11. The last example we shall give of a word of this family, is Ἱλαστήριος, an adjective, and which, when not accompanied by a substantive, might signify either a propitiator, ὁ ἱλαστήριος, or a propitiatory, τὸ ἱλαστήριον, βῆμα or ἐπίθεμα being understood, so as to complete the expression for a mercy-seat; or, without the article, we are left at liberty to understand the word in either of these senses, or in the sense of propitiation. It is so left in Rom. iii. 25, and we incline to the idea of its personal signification as applied to Christ, and expressive of Him as the propitiator. But the evidence is not at all suspended on this determination. Any of these interpretations will suit the argument equally, though, as in all other instances, the word of itself but tells us in the general of God being made placable through Christ; and the real strength of the proof lies as usual in the context, "through faith in His *blood*," and that God's justice or righteousness might shine forth as well as His forbearance, which appertains to the other attribute of mercy. In Heb. ix. 5, where τὸ ἱλαστήριον occurs, the evidence lies in the subsequent context, ver. 5-12, &c.

12. Let us now look for a moment at the contexts in the Old Testament, where words of this family occur in the Septuagint, and which generally stand in counterpart to *Kepher* in the Hebrew, Ex. xxx. 10; Lev. i. 4; iv. 20; iv. 31. The expres-

sion, "a sweet savour unto the Lord," connects immediately the placation of the Lawgiver with the death of the animal. Connect this with Eph. v. 2. I do not say but that the New Testament passage contains in itself the whole pith of a sufficient testimony; but it is good to meet with the frequent reiterations of it in the description of those sacrifices, by which we are expressly told, that the great sacrifice was shadowed forth, Lev. vi. 30; viii. 15; see ver. 14, "Laid their hands." The meaning of this part of the process is made as plain as any description can make it in Lev. xvi. 21. After which it is not necessary, for the purpose of confirming this transference of sin from the people to the animal, to advert, though it be in full harmony with the fact of such a transference, to the circumstance of the man having contracted uncleanness, by his very office of taking out the goat into the wilderness, and so having to purify himself, Lev. xvi. 26. The same process had to be undergone by the man who carried forth the bullock and goat without the camp. The stress laid on these cleansings by Outram and others, exemplifies the preference one has for a conclusion when he comes at it by an argument, rather than when he gets it at once from a simple affirmation. Were it not for this tendency, a greater stress would be laid than is on the naked statement, that God "laid on him the iniquities of us all" (Isa. liii. 6). And if this will not satisfy the desire for more confirmation, perhaps a clause in the next verse may not be without its efficacy, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." There is a flood of evidence in the continued description of this chapter. And there is also evidence of the same first-rate character in another part of Scripture, which expresses direct of our Saviour, not the laying on, as in the last instance, which took place on the great day of atonement, but another step in the procedure of that day—the carrying of the victim without the camp. (Heb. xiii. 10-12.)

13. My time will not allow of a further induction with the words either of this or of any other family, only I cannot pass over Θύω, and its derivations. It is far more a ritual word than Σφάζω, which latter is oftener used for slaying in general, though sometimes for putting to death sacrificially, as in Rev. v. 6, 9, 12; xiii. 8. Θύω is also used for slaying animals for food, as in Matt. xxii. 4, and other places; but far oftener for slaying in sacrifice, like the counterpart Hebrew word *Zebeh*, 1 Cor. x. 20; Mark xiv. 12; 1 Cor. v. 7. This word was

anciently employed by Homer ritually, but to express another sense than that of sacrifice—to cast into the fire of the victuals and wine; and latterly by the classical Greek writers it became expressive of sacrifice. In both ways the ritual character extends to the numerous derivations of this word. It is curious to trace the transformations of meaning that have taken place upon the words of this family, beginning with Homer, and passing onward to subsequent authors. We have *Θυμίαμα* in the sense of *suffitus* or *odoramentum:* the burning of spices was an accompaniment of sacrifice; and hence the words of this genus obtained a sacrificial meaning as well as those words which originally indicated but the effect of the sacrifice in pacifying or making propitious the offended Deity. The burning of the incense produced that sweet savour of which we so often read in the description of a sacrificial offering. The same class of words was employed to designate the proper and essential act of sacrifice or slaughter of the animal; and so, too, the altar, as *Θυσιαστήριον* in 1 Cor. x. 18; ix. 13. Here the word has the same termination as *Ἱλαστήριον*, which signifies the propitiatory or mercy-seat. *Θύϊνος* is the name of a particular wood, which, in burning, gave forth a sweet odorous smell. Other derivatives are illustrative of the same thing, as *Thus*, which signifies frankincense, and *Thuribulum*, a censer, as *Θυσιαστήριον* does an altar. For the scriptural instances of this word, which bear upon the doctrine of Christ's death being a sacrifice, see *Θυσία* in Heb. v. 1; vii. 27, &c. But besides the act of sacrificing, it signifies, like the Hebrew *Zebeh*, the victim, 1 Cor. x. 28. *Θυσιαστήριον, altar; Θυμιατήριον, altar of incense; Θυμιάω, to burn incense.* Should we trace *Θυσία* and *Zebeh* through the Old and New Testament, it would involve us in such a cloud of testimonies that we are forced for the present to desist. Let me only remark of this word *Θυσία*, that, unlike most of the others, its meaning was literally and primarily sacrificial; and afterwards used tropically, it acquired a more general meaning—whereas *ἱλασμὸς* and certain more terms were at first general—but from frequent use and application in the matter of sacrifices, it has obtained an appropriate sacrificial meaning by association. Examples of the change undergone by *Θυσία* are found in Rom. xii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Heb. xiii. 15, 16; Phil. iv. 18. When used ritually, and when otherwise, can be determined, as in every other case, by its place and context; and if, instead of discussing the sense generally, we betook ourselves to the actual passages where the

word in question occurs, we should soon, and on the most proper and satisfactory evidence, make up our minds as to the real signification.

14. I shall conclude with a short list of passages, containing the whole pith and substance of the doctrine which has detained us so long.—1 Tim. ii. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 18; ii. 24; Heb. x. 14, 26; Eph. i. 7.

15. I might have prosecuted this induction both with these and other words a great deal further. The same method might be observed with the prepositions ὑπὲρ, ἀντὶ, διὰ, &c. Detach these from their contexts, and an interminable controversy might be struck out of one meaning against another meaning, and where the combatants, with their respective instances, might both be in the right. And so the defenders of the faith have had many a weary, but, in my opinion, most irrelevant struggle, to maintain with the Socinians. It was wise in *them* to shut out the circumambient light that gathered around the word in debate from the passage where it lay, and so to hinge the question upon the word itself looked to singly; but it is not equally wise in the orthodox to join issue with them upon such a discussion, when the evidence for the doctrine shines clear as day from statements that both speak their own sense and the sense of the phraseology in which they are couched, down to every the minutest term in it. As when we read of men reconciled to God, but reconciled *by the death of His Son;* or of the high priest transferring, by the imposition of hands, the sins of the people to the victim that was slain in sacrifice; or, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, of Christ, at once the High Priest and the victim, *offering Himself* without spot to God, and so purging us *by His own blood*, that by this blood we are called upon to enter into the Holiest with all boldness; or of innumerable other passages, where, apart from the philology that withdraws itself from the broad aspect of things, and concentrates its regards exclusively on some microscopic fragment which it has been pleased to detach for a separate examination, as to intercept the light that would otherwise shine upon it far around—the doctrine we are in quest of, as if written with a sunbeam, stands forth, patent and unequivocal, in the sight of all men.

16. We can prosecute no further at present our scriptural inquiries into the doctrine of the atonement; but we shall not have completed our view of all that Christ has done for us as our substitute, unless we present you, as a distinct topic of considera-

tion, with the doctrine of His imputed righteousness. We do not think that the second doctrine has been made to stand out very noticeably or very prominently from the first, so as to offer for our contemplation two individuals instead of one. We do not think that they are much looked to as separate objects of regard in the writings of the Fathers, or even of the earlier reformers, and it is only in the works of our more thoroughly systematic authors—where, instead of being merged together under the general aspect of Christ's mediation, they have had each a treatment bestowed upon it apart from the other, and the two subjects are so extricated, that each can be set forth into a distinct article of theology, and be made to rest on a peculiar argument of its own. The additional idea thus brought out is, that Christ hath not only suffered for us, but served for us. By the doctrine of the atonement, I am told that He hath borne for sinners their punishment, so as to rescue them from hell; and by the doctrine of the imputed righteousness, I am told that He has earned for sinners a right which entitles them to heaven. These two services are not only distinguishable in thought, but, historically and really, are often, nay, very commonly, of distinct fulfilment in the business of law and governments. That sentence of acquittal by which a prisoner is absolved from crime, and therefore dismissed *simpliciter* from the bar, is of very different effect from that positive sentence of award by which a claimant establishes his right to some honourable distinction, or some prize and inheritance of glory, by the part he has proved to have borne in some high service of courage and patriotism. By the first step he is only advanced from a state of condemnation to the midway state of innocence; by the second, he is advanced to a state of positive favour, to some rich preferment, it may be, or to a place of distinction in the palace and near the person of his sovereign. You will thus understand the difference between a negative and a positive justification. By the one we are relieved from the penalties of transgression, by the other we obtain a part and an interest in the promises of obedience. To achieve the first, Christ is said to have borne the chastisement of our peace; to achieve the second, Christ is said to have fulfilled all righteousness. He took upon Him our guilt when He bore the chastisement of our peace; and He lays upon us His righteousness, which He completed with His last breath by the finished work of a perfect obedience—even that obedience the merits of which are unto all and upon all who believe. We are looked

upon as innocent creatures in virtue of Christ having been made sin for us, though He knew no sin. We are looked upon as deserving creatures in virtue of our being made the righteousness of God in Him. Both of these may be gathered from Scripture as benefits distinct in themselves, and forming distinct parts of our salvation, though not presented to us there in the tabular scheme of that scholastic and systematic theology which the Church was compelled to frame—not for the purpose of supplementing Scripture, but for the purpose of defending it against the perversions of heresy. Yet both the atonement and the imputed righteousness, though not announced in the Bible as in any of the Confessions of orthodoxy, may be easily discovered in many of its passages, and both are substantially comprised within the one verse which we have now referred to: —"He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

17. Before adducing any more Scripture in support of this doctrine, let me advert to it as the common property of both—that whether we look to the footing on which our sins are remitted to us, or to the footing on which a positive merit is imputed to us, neither the indemnity, on the one hand, nor the reward upon the other, are conferred by a simple act of mercy, but of mercy in conjunction with righteousness. This is the leading, I would say the characteristic, peculiarity of the gospel salvation. That salvation may be made to lie in two particulars—our deliverance from hell, and our translation into heaven; but with both, instead of a mere gratuitous dispensation prompted by the love or the compassion of heaven's Sovereign—with both the one and the other is somehow a right associated. Our present impunity is not a forgiveness only, but a propitiated forgiveness. Our future hope is not an inheritance only, but a purchased inheritance. True, eternal life is said to be a gift; but mark the qualification —it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And it is said that God hath given to us eternal life; but mark again the qualification—it is said that "this life is in his Son." Through Him who magnified the law and made it honourable, our deliverance from the wrath and our advancement to the favour of the great Lawgiver, have alike been strictly legalized. Mercy stands forth pre-eminent in both; but it is mercy shrined in all the characters of an august and inviolable sacredness. On the great deed of our world's reconciliation there stands as full and as legible an impress of the Divine majesty as of the

Divine love; and the voice which speaketh to us from heaven, proclaiming an open door of welcome and acceptance to the guiltiest of us all, did not fall on the charmed ear of our outcast species, till, by our once crucified and now exalted Saviour, the jurisprudence of the upper sanctuary had the homage done to it of a complete and awful reparation.

18. The negative and the positive in the matter of our justification are thus plainly yet powerfully discriminated, the one from the other, by Jonathan Edwards:—"Some suppose that nothing more is intended in Scripture by justification than barely the remission of sins. If so, it is very strange, if we consider the nature of the case; for it is most evident, and none will deny, that it is with respect to the rule or law of God we are under, that we are said in Scripture to be either justified or condemned. Now what is it to justify a person as the subject of a law or rule, but to judge him as standing right with respect to that rule? To justify a person in a particular case, is to approve of him as standing right, as subject to the law in that case; and to justify in general, is to pass him in judgment, as standing right in a state correspondent to the law or rule in general; but certainly, in order to a person's being looked on as standing right with respect to the rule in general, or in a state corresponding with the law of God, more is needful than not having the guilt of sin; for whatever that law is, whether a new or an old one, doubtless something positive is needed in order to its being answered. We are no more justified by the voice of the law, or of him that judges according to it, by a mere pardon of sin, than Adam, our first surety, was justified by the law, at the first point of his existence, before he had fulfilled the obedience of the law, or had so much as any trial whether he would fulfil it or no. If Adam had finished his course of perfect obedience, he would have been justified; and certainly his justification would have implied something more than what is merely negative; he would have been approved of, as having fulfilled the righteousness of the law, and accordingly would have been adjudged to the reward of it. So Christ, our second surety, (in whose justification all whose surety He is are virtually justified), was not justified till He had done the work the Father had appointed Him, and kept the Father's commandments through all trials; and then in His resurrection He was justified. When He had been put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit (1 Pet. iii. 18), then He that was manifest

in the flesh was justified in the Spirit (1 Tim. iii. 16); but God, when He justified Him in raising Him from the dead, did not only release Him from His humiliation for sin, and acquit Him from any further suffering or abasement for it, but admitted Him to that eternal and immortal life, and to the beginning of that exaltation that was the reward of what He had done. And indeed, the justification of a believer is no other than his being admitted to communion in the justification of this head and surety of all believers; for as Christ suffered the punishment of sin, not as a private person, but as our surety, so when after this suffering He was raised from the dead, He was therein justified, not as a private person, but as the surety and representative of all that should believe in Him. So that He was raised again not only for His own, but also for our justification, according to the apostle (Rom. iv. 25),—'Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' And therefore it is that the apostle says, as he does in Rom. viii. 34,—'Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again.'

"But that a believer's justification implies not only remission of sin, or acquittance from the wrath due to it, but also an admittance to a title to that glory which is the reward of righteousness, is more directly taught in the Scripture, particularly in Rom. v. 1. 2, where the apostle mentions both these as joint benefits implied in justification:—'Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.' So remission of sin, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, are mentioned together as what are jointly obtained by faith in Christ (Acts xxvi. 18,)—'That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in me.' Both these are without doubt implied in that passing from death to life, which Christ speaks of as the fruit of faith, and which He opposes to condemnation (John v. 24),—'Verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life....

"To suppose that all Christ does is only to make atonement for us by suffering, is to make Him our Saviour but in part. It is to rob Him of half His glory as a Saviour. For if so, all that He does is to deliver us from hell; He does not pur-

chase Heaven for us. The adverse scheme supposes that He purchases heaven for us, in that He satisfies for the imperfections of our obedience, and so purchases that our sincere imperfect obedience might be accepted as the condition of eternal life; and so purchases an opportunity for us to obtain heaven by our own obedience. But to purchase heaven for us only in this sense, is to purchase it in no sense at all; for all of it comes to no more than a satisfaction for our sins, or removing the penalty by suffering in our stead. For all the purchasing they speak of, that our imperfect obedience should be accepted, is only His satisfying for the sinful imperfection of our obedience; or, which is the same thing, making atonement for the sin that our obedience is attended with. But that is not purchasing heaven, merely to set us at liberty again, that we may go and get heaven by what we do ourselves: all that Christ does is only to pay a debt for us; there is no positive purchase of any good. We are taught in Scripture that heaven is purchased for us; it is called the *purchased possession* (Eph. i. 14.) The gospel proposes the eternal inheritance, not to be acquired, as the first covenant did, but as already acquired and purchased. But he that pays a man's debt for him, and so delivers him from slavery, cannot be said to purchase an estate for him, merely because he sets him at liberty, so that henceforward he has an opportunity to get an estate by his own hand-labour. So that, according to this scheme, the saints in heaven have no reason to thank Christ for purchasing heaven for them, or redeeming them to God, and making them kings and priests, as we have an account that they do, in Rev. v. 9.

"Justification by the righteousness and obedience of Christ is a doctrine that the Scripture teaches in very full terms (Rom. v. 18, 19),—'By the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.' Here in one verse we are told that we have justification by Christ's righteousness; and, that there might be no room to understand the righteousness spoken of, merely of Christ's atonement by His suffering the penalty, in the next verse it is put in other terms, and asserted, that it is by Christ's obedience we are made righteous. It is scarcely possible anything should be more full and determined; the terms, taken singly, are such as fix their own meaning, and taken together, they fix the meaning of each other.

The words show that we are justified by that righteousness of Christ which consists in His obedience, and that we are made righteous or justified by that obedience of His, that is, His righteousness, or moral goodness before God.

"Here possibly it may be objected, that this text means only that we are justified by Christ's passive obedience.

"To this I answer, whether we call it active or passive, it alters not the case as to the present argument, as long as it is evident by the words, that it is not merely under the notion of an atonement for disobedience, or a satisfaction for unrighteousness, but under the notion of a positive obedience, and a righteousness, or moral goodness, that it justifies us, or makes us righteous; because both the words, *righteousness* and *obedience*, are used, and used too as the opposites to sin and disobedience, and an offence. 'Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' Now, what can be meant by righteousness when spoken of as the opposite to sin or moral evil, but moral goodness? What is the righteousness that is the opposite of an offence but the behaviour that is well-pleasing? and what can be meant by obedience, when spoken of as the opposite of disobedience, or going contrary to a command, but a positive obeying and an actual complying with the command? So that there is no room for any invented distinction of active and passive, to hurt the argument from this Scripture; for it is evident by it, as anything can be, that believers are justified by the righteousness and obedience of Christ, under the notion of His moral goodness—His positive obeying, and actual complying with the commands of God, and that behaviour which, because of its conformity to His commands, was well-pleasing in His sight. This is all that ever any need to desire to have granted in this dispute."*

19. It is impossible to read the sermon from which this extract has been taken, and in the knowledge that at its first delivery it was the instrument of one of the most extensive awakenings which ever took place in modern times, without being struck by the power of Christian truth, however simply and nakedly told, on the hearts and consciences of men. It is throughout a composition of mere statements and reasonings

* Discourse on Justification by Faith Alone.—Rom. iv. 5.

without urgency, without fervour, having in it no impassioned appeal to the affections of our nature, and written in the plainest style, though at times bordering on the metaphysical, of a cold didactic exposition. Out and out it is an address of pure instruction, holding converse with the intellect alone; and the marvel is, the force which we historically know it had to captivate and subdue the multitude who heard it. It is the agency of the Spirit, and that alone, which can dissipate the wonder; but knowing that He makes use of suitable instruments in working on the soul of man, the inference still remains good, and not affected by the fact of His operation—that after all it is truth, and truth addressed to and taken cognizance of by the understanding, which forms the mighty engine of conversion from sin to righteousness. And in the instance before us, it was not the truth as urged, but the truth simply as stated—the mere substance of the doctrine, and not the doctrine recommended by any grace of eloquence, or enforced by any expostulation the object of which was either to win or to terrify. It was but the truth calmly and clearly expounded, on the one hand, and by its operating, not on the passions, but the convictions of men, simply believed in, on the other, which proved the immediate, the instrumental cause of one of the greatest practical triumphs ever effected during these later ages in the history of Christianization. It evinces the high place which Christianity gives to a right intellectual state, the sort of central or presiding eminence which it gives to a right apprehension of the truth, and this in perfect harmony with various Bible attestations. Not grace only, but "truth came by Jesus Christ."—"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."—"I am" not the way and the life only, but "the truth."—"The Spirit of truth will guide you into all truth."—"Sanctified by the truth."—"Renewed in knowledge."—"Every one that knoweth the truth heareth my voice."—"By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience."—"Chosen to salvation through belief of the truth."—"Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth;"—all demonstrative of the presiding influence which belief, or a right understanding of the truth has—as if it were the great master principle, the primary element of a man's Christianity. In the effect of Jonathan Edwards' sermon we have a practical exemplification of it—a sermon from beginning to end purely and thoroughly intellectual—the converse of mind with mind, and wholly made up of ideas and

arguments. I cannot fancy a more impressive spectacle than Edwards rightly dividing the word of truth to the hearers of his homely congregation, with no other stimulus than that of conscience, which put their understanding on its utmost stretch, while their pastor told the footing of a sinner's acceptance, or how it was that man obtained justification from God. To me it is a cheering and an elevating thought that an assemblage of common people should have comprehended such a sermon; and that in the act of listening to this profound dissertation, so many of them, through the medium of the intellect, should have become spiritual men. It confirms my every impression of the great capacities, not only for highest Christian worth, but for the high intelligence, of our general population. For the reverse phenomenon also is true. We have long been assured that when a man becomes a Christian he makes a prodigious ascent in the scale of intellect; and thus by means of a universal religious education, there would be generated an immense force and fulness of mind throughout the commonwealth. We have seen it in individual specimens, that when a man becomes a saint he becomes a sage—"He who is spiritual judging all things, while himself is judged of no man."

20. But let us now proceed to lay before you a few of the most decisive texts in favour of the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness as our positive justification in the sight of God.

21. The Saviour Jesus Christ would scarcely have been called by Jeremiah "the Lord our righteousness" (xxiii. 6), had He only redeemed His people from guilt and its punishment, and not invested them with the title to an affirmative reward.

22. But these two are expressly distinguished from each other in Scripture, as in the passage 1 Cor. i. 30,—"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:" unless we suppose a tautology, which is quite inadmissible in such an enumeration of the distinct benefits we obtain from Christ as we are here presented with—"wisdom, *righteousness*, sanctification, *redemption*." It is a forensic righteousness, to distinguish it from sanctification, the personal righteousness. And it is the righteousness of a positive justification, (*δικαιοσύνη*), to distinguish it from the righteousness of a negative justification (*ἀπολύτρωσις*.)

23. And these two benefits are substantially set forth though not by their express names of *δικαιοσύνη* and *ἀπολύτρωσις* in the

following passages:—Rom. v. 1, 2,—"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Peace with God because His enmity is arrested, and we have no infliction to dread because of it.—Grace from God, because, more than the cessation of enmity, there is now positive favour; and on the strength of this we rejoice in the hope of His glory. (Acts xxvi. 18),—"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Had the salvation stopped at the forgiveness of sins, it would have been but a negative salvation. But it passes and advances into the positive, when, over and above the forgiveness (ἄφεσις), there is an inheritance (κλῆρος) awarded to us—an inheritance among them which are sanctified. The two are blended into one in the last clause of John v. 24,—"He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." The not coming into condemnation sets forth the first benefit singly. The passing from death unto life gives the whole transition, from that death which is the penalty, to that life which is the affirmative reward. In like manner, in John iii. 36,—"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," where there is positive happiness; he that believeth not hath something more than the negation of this happiness, but the positive misery of the wrath of God abiding on him. Relief from the one, and bestowment of the other, form the two steps by which the translation is completed.

24. There are some remarkable passages in which the death of Christ is related to our redemption from punishment, and His resurrection to that justification which assures us of a positive reward. But first let me premise that the Holy Spirit is represented in Scripture as the agent, by the forthputting of whose power it was that Christ, quickened into life, arose from the dead. This is not obscurely intimated to us in Rom. i. 4, and it is still more decisively stated to have been the work of God in Eph. i. 20. The same thing is intimated in Phil. ii. 9, where His resurrection is spoken of—"wherefore" (διὸ)—as the reward of His obedience.* Now, part of that reward consisted not

* See also Heb. ii. 9.

merely in the homage which He receives from the world that has been saved by Him, but in the power to confer benefits on that world: and so He sends that Spirit which quickened Himself to quicken His people,—He being the first-fruits of them that slept (1 Cor. xv. 20). But the identity of power put forth in the two operations of raising Him from the grave, and raising us to newness of life, is set before us in Eph. i. 19; ii. 5, 6:—"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power."—"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Innumerable traces of this connexion are to be found throughout the New Testament; but what we have immediately to do with, is the relation in which the resurrection stands to the positive justification of believers.

25. In 1 Pet. iii. 18, we have a very distinct testimony to the agency of the Spirit in the resurrection of Christ—"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." There is a remarkable counterpart to the two clauses of this verse in 1 Tim. iii. 16, which seems to relate the resurrection somehow or other with justification—"And, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Had Christ but died as an atonement, this might have released us from the penalty of our guilt; but He rose again, because the whole of His obedience was more than commensurate to the payment of our debt. But furthermore, or over and above this, He earned a reward—even that exaltation from the grave, which is expressly viewed in the light of a recompense or deserved preferment, in the passage quoted from the Epistle to the Philippians; and as this was only the first-fruit of the general resurrection unto life of those who believe in Him, this last may be looked upon as earned in like manner, or the affirmative remuneration won for us by the righteousness of Him who served for us, as well as suffered for us. This guides us to a consistent meaning for Rom. iv. 25,—"Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

He was delivered, betrayed into the hands of murderers, given up to the death for us, died for our offences; and in so doing, bore away our guilt. The first clause presents us with the negative, the second with the positive justification. He was raised again, because He did more than absorb our condemnation by His sufferings. He won eternal life for us by His services—even that eternal life within the veil, whither He as the first-fruits and the forerunner hath already entered, and where He both prepares and claims a place for all His followers as their rightful inheritance, even the inheritance which He himself hath purchased and won for them. And so He who was delivered for our offences, was raised again for our justification (*δικαίωσις.*)

26. The *διὰ* which occurs twice in this verse, governs the accusative in both instances. This does not absolutely guide us to the determination, whether it denotes the antecedency, as of an efficient cause, or refers to a purpose or final cause. If the former, then the clause that He was delivered for our offences, means that our offences brought Him to the cross; and the clause that He was raised for our justification, means that our justification, completed by His obedience, released Him from the prison-house of the grave. If the latter, then the first clause signifies that He died to atone for our offences; and the second, that He rose again to make good our justification, to plead for us the merits, and prepare for us the rewards of His own righteousness. All this is in beautiful harmony with Rom. viii. 34,—"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." The very general word *ἐντυγχάνω* may signify, not to intercede, but to advocate, forensically to state one's cause, to mediate for one's advantage—"to plead our cause at God's right hand, omnipotent to save." See Schleusner's Lexicon and others. Ponder, too, the expression of "heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ."

27. Though the distinction between positive and negative justification has a foundation in Scripture, the counterpart distinction between Christ's active and passive obedience is more scholastic than scriptural. This will sufficiently appear from the following passage extracted from Edwards' sermon on Justification:—"So that Christ's laying down His life might be part of that obedience by which we are justified, though it was a positive precept not given to Adam. It was doubtless

Christ's main act of obedience, because it was obedience to a command that was attended with immensely the greatest difficulty, and so to a command that was the greatest trial of His obedience. His respect shown to God in it, and His honour to God's authority, were proportionably great. It is spoken of in Scripture as Christ's principal act of obedience. Phil. ii. 7, 8,—'But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.' Heb. v. 8,—'Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered.' It was mainly by this act of obedience that Christ purchased so glorious a reward for himself. Phil. ii. 8, 9,—'He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name.' And it therefore follows from what has been already said, that it is mainly by this act of obedience that believers in Christ also have the reward of glory, or come to partake with Christ in His glory. We are as much saved by the death of Christ, as His yielding Himself to die was an act of obedience, as we are, as it was a propitiation for our sins; for as it was not the only act of obedience that merited—He having performed meritorious acts of obedience through the whole course of His life; so neither was it the only suffering that was propitiatory—all His sufferings through the whole course of His life being propitiatory, as well as every act of obedience meritorious. Indeed, this was His principal suffering; and it was as much His principal act of obedience.

"Hence we may see how that the death of Christ did not only make atonement, but also merited eternal life; and hence we may see how by the blood of Christ we are not only redeemed from sin, but redeemed unto God; and therefore the Scripture seems everywhere to attribute the whole of salvation to the blood of Christ. This precious blood is as much the main price by which heaven is purchased, as it is the main price by which we are redeemed from hell. The positive righteousness of Christ, or that price by which He merited, was of equal value with that by which He satisfied: for indeed it was the same price. He spilled His blood to satisfy, and by reason of the infinite dignity of His person, His sufferings were looked upon as of infinite value, and equivalent to the eternal sufferings of a finite creature. And He spilled His blood out of respect to

the honour of God's majesty, and in submission to His authority, who had commanded Him so to do: and His obedience therein was of infinite value, both because of the dignity of the person that performed it, and because He put Himself to infinite expense to perform it, whereby the infinite degree of His regard to God's authority appeared."

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SATISFACTION THAT HAD TO BE RENDERED TO THE TRUTH AND JUSTICE OF GOD, ERE THAT SINNERS COULD BE RE-ADMITTED INTO FAVOUR.

1. HAVING now taken a general view of the scriptural evidence, both for the doctrines of the atonement and the imputed righteousness, let us now present you with such reflections as the contemplation of these is fitted to suggest.

2. Had sinners been re-admitted into favour by simple and gratuitous award of forgiveness, there is one effect of which we do not see how it could have been got over. What would have become of our reverence for the authority of God? How could we have retained an entire and unbroken respect for His whole character? What could we have made of His solemn and proclaimed assurances against the children of iniquity; or what else would have been the moral government of the Eternal, but the mockery of a name? It is not enough reflected upon how much a mere act of general mercy would have unhinged the whole system of the divine economy among men; not only degrading the throne of the Almighty into that of a fallen sovereign, but in fact giving sanction to a wide and lawless impunity in the world. Not only would the high jurisprudence of heaven have suffered violence, but it would have brought down upon earth all the violence of a moral anarchy; for nothing can so put mankind at large as the vague imagination of an obscure, perhaps a variable or fluctuating, line between the placability of God and His justice. In its effect upon practice, it is tantamount to an obliteration of the limit altogether. The fence between sin and sacredness were as good as broken down; and man would sin just as much as he liked, and then draw on the placability of God just as much as he found occasion for it. It is thus that there is so much of deep and fatal tranquillity in the world, even in the midst of the world's ungodliness. It is not

only because God is seldom thought of; but it is because the thought of His inviolable sanctity, and of His absolute everlasting truth, and of a law that must be upheld in its vindicated sanctions, though in the execution of them heaven and earth should be made to pass away; it is because thoughts like these are not adequately felt or pondered on, that peace, when there is no peace, has such an undisturbed hold in society. Under a system of indefinite mercy, or of mercy at the expense of justice, God no longer stands forth in the aspect of a moral governor; and the restraints of a moral government are either wholly unfelt, or are of no practical efficacy in the world.

3. Had it been, then, by a bare and general deed of amnesty that the world was recalled to friendship with God, there would have been a felt impunity for sin upon earth; and in heaven, a felt desecration would have been inflicted thereby on the character of the Godhead. Even our prior natural theology would have been revolted by it; and in spite of themselves, there would have been a felt shock on the consciences of men. Matters would have been placed in a state of mal-adjustment, even with the sentiments of our own moral nature, for truth and justice are felt to have their high, their rightful demands; and when these are not satisfied, there is a certain unappeased sense of disorder and deficiency upon all spirits. There is a poetic, a sentimental theism, by which mercy is enshrined as the alone attribute of the divinity, that serves to regale the imagination, and lull the human conscience into still profounder apathy than before. But it is out of keeping even with the constitution of humanity. All the higher, the more serious feelings and faculties of our nature reclaim against it; and notwithstanding the taste and the tenderness of these representations, in which God is viewed but as the kind and indulgent Father of a family, we cannot cease to regard Him according to the high state and sovereignty of a monarch, whose jurisdiction over the creature must be upholden: and whose claims of authority, paramount and incommutable, must not be surrendered, even at the call of mercy, though lifted up on behalf of the undone species of a ruined world. It is thus that a proclamation of forgiveness, of simple unaccompanied forgiveness, would have been an incomplete demonstration of the Godhead. It would have marred and mutilated the aspect of the Divinity. The questions of His justice and truth, and the dignity of His government, would have all been undisposed of. We know not a more impressive description of the

high and holy Being with whom we have to do, than in the brief but most emphatic statement of a single Bible clause—that He cannot be mocked. But this solemn proclamation of a law trampled on with impunity—this denunciation of threats and terrible consequences never executed—this assertion of an authority never enforced—and of penalties recalled from the guilty, who had braved them, by an act of easy and good-natured connivance—these all serve to undermine the throne of God, and to cast upon Him and upon His ways a most degrading mockery.

4. In these circumstances, we cannot imagine a demonstration of more exquisite skilfulness, by which all difficulties are met, and every sentiment of reverence that we associated with the Divinity, instead of being thwarted or scandalized, is exalted to the uttermost, than that furnished by the atonement of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world. The penalty was not recalled, it was only transferred; and it gives a more dreadful effect and significancy to the threatenings of God, that though averted from us, they were all discharged on the head of the illustrious Sufferer, who took upon Him the burden of our obligations, and so bowed Himself unto the sacrifice. There is no affront, but the greatest possible homage, rendered by this proceeding to heaven's high jurisprudence. It was indeed a signal triumph of the divine wisdom to find out a way by which the transgressors of the law might be readmitted into favour, and yet the law itself be magnified and made honourable. It is altogether worthy of a God—by one act to seal the pardon of the sinner, and to affix the deepest stigma upon sin. It is thus that on the cross of Christ there sits a radiance of all the attributes. Mercy and truth meet there; and the access of the offender to his reconciled God is by a way of deepest sacredness.

5. There is a term used by Turretin and others, which I feel inclined to apply to our present subject. They speak of knowledge as admitting of increase in two ways—extensively or intensively. It increases extensively by the number of distinct truths or informations which it appropriates—by the apposition, as it were, of one particular to another. Thus when we are bidden to increase in the knowledge of God, we may do so by becoming acquainted with some new attribute, or some new work and style of procedure of which we did not know before. But there is another way of increasing in this knowledge—intensively—which is without the addition of any truths or infor-

mations respecting Him, but only by a deeper and fuller sense, and so a more intense feeling of the truths that we have already learned. This knowledge, and then this more intense knowledge of the very same truth stand related to each other, very much as the γνῶσις and the ἐπίγνωσις do in Greek. They do not relate to different things; but while the one implies a discernment and an impression, the other implies a clearer discernment and more powerful impression of the very same thing. Now it is in this latter way I apprehend chiefly that we grow in the knowledge of Christ. Not that we have to look, at least in our present state, for any additional informations respecting Him to those which are already presented in the record—not because we are in circumstances for knowing numerically more truths respecting Him than we know already; but because there is indefinite room for still profounder views, and a still deeper sense and impression of what we do know. I think that the increase of our knowledge in this latter sense is pre-eminently applicable to the doctrine of the atonement—to that part of Christianity specialized by the apostle, who was determined "to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I think, too, that it is the property of infinite depth rather than of infinite variety, that suggests the expression of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that makes the apostle speak of our comprehending the length, and the breadth, and the height, and the depth of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. I do not say that by drinking deep into the doctrine of the atonement, you draw up novelties of truth, or are enabled thereby to give forth novelties of statement. We cannot therefore say the thing differently, or say it higher, than we did at the first. But we may feel it differently, and feel it indefinitely higher than we did at the first. The power of language is limited, and so becomes soon inadequate to the expression of thoughts and feelings, ever growing more intense on a subject which admits in thought of endless augmentation. The doctrine of the atonement we hold to be pre-eminently such a subject. We may have few distinct things to say of it; but they are such things as, however soon overtaken in point of saying, in point of sense and sentiment you can never come to the end of. The love that prompted it—the wisdom that devised it—the admirable fitness of it to preserve unbroken the authority of the Lawgiver, while it provides an amnesty, a wide and welcome amnesty, for the most heinous transgressors of His law—the union, the blended harmony, of

the benevolence that is there, with august and inviolable sacredness—the lustre it pours over the high and the holy attributes of God, while it rears a firm pathway between earth and heaven for the unholiest of us all—the charm that resides in this single truth at once to pacify the conscience and to purify the heart, to give unbounded security in the friendship of God, while it quickens into activity and life all the springs of a new obedience, —these are what elevates this great doctrine into the capital truth of the Christian system, the dearest of our sentiments upon earth, the song of our eternity.

6. And here we may again remark how much the interest of the atonement, and more especially its moral effect upon the heart, is enhanced by the dignity, by the divinity of the Sufferer. What a magnificent homage must such a sacrifice be deemed to the worth and authority of the law—what a dread exhibition of the evil of sin—what a testimony, broken forth as it were from heaven upon earth, to the infinity of the outrage, when the high and the holy jurisprudence of Heaven was violated! And then what a movement of pity and infinite condescension, when God manifest in the flesh assumed the infirmities of our nature, and served, and suffered, and died for our sakes! In an expiation so mighty, what a guarantee for our sure and everlasting forgiveness! When we broke the commandment, an arm of infinite strength was lifted up to destroy; but now an arm of infinite strength is lifted up to save. How both the mercy and the justice of God are irradiated by this transaction—when in love to the world, He gave up His only beloved Son to the weight and agony of such an endurance; and when, ere the world could be readmitted into favour, such an endurance behoved to be borne. It will be found that each of these sentiments, respecting the work of the Saviour and the work of His salvation, is indefinitely deepened by the sense of His divinity. The price of our redemption gives new emphasis to the feeling of its preciousness; and the felt gratitude, the constraining influence of the Saviour's love, all the motives to the new obedience of the gospel, are heightened to the uttermost by the knowledge that Christ is God. Still, it is a subject on which one's knowledge grows intensively rather than extensively. It is a theme not to be so much expatiated on in words as to be cherished and deepened in the solitude and devotion of one's own thoughts. It is not so much a discursive topic, as one on which to concentrate all those thoughtful regards that are due to the

first and the greatest of principles, or to the first and greatest object of affection. It is a profound and perennial feeling which abides in the heart of every real believer; and, strengthening and growing through eternity, will actuate all the songs and services of heaven.

7. But to proceed in our didactic exposition of the subject. There is a distinction made by theologians between the active and the passive righteousness of Christ. Substantially, I am inclined to adopt it. I hold it to be scriptural, and there is a fulness in the conception which better accords with all that we are taught to believe respecting the fulness of the gospel remedy, and which seems suited to the real exigencies of our species. By this view He is regarded, not merely as having suffered, but as having served for us—not merely as having borne our penalties, and so furnished us with a plea for forgiveness, but as having done our work of incumbent obedience, and so furnished us with a plea for reward. He hath done more than purchased our release from the agonies of hell—He hath purchased for us an inheritance in heaven. Had He only brought an atonement into the world, we should have been but as assoilzied criminals, or dismissed *simpliciter* from the bar—freed from the vengeance of our country's outraged laws. But He brought in an everlasting righteousness also; and on its strength we are preferred to a seat of honour and distinction in the palace of our Sovereign. On the limited conception of the matter, we are but placed in a midway state between a wretched and a blissful eternity. On the extended conception of it, there is secured our complete translation from the condemnation of the one to the triumphs and enjoyments of the other. The redemption that is through the blood of Jesus is but the forgiveness of sins. But He is made unto us righteousness as well as redemption; and we, in virtue of this glorious investiture, can lay positive claim to a place and a preferment in Paradise. In a word, we can not only plead the efficacy of His death—we can plead the affirmative merit of His obedience; and so, all humbled as we ought to be when we think of our destitution in ourselves, we, in Him, have both a right of discharge from the prison-house of condemnation, and a right of entry into the upper mansions that He has gone to prepare for us.

8. With every step in fact of our recovery, there seems to be a righteousness, and so a right associated. Our deliverance from hell is not a simple gratuity, for ours is a purchased redemp-

tion. Neither is our admission into heaven a simple gratuity, for ours is a purchased inheritance. The great, the specifying characteristic of the gospel dispensation is not that it is a dispensation of mercy alone, but of mercy in conjunction with righteousness. What the gospel proposes is not a mere gift of eternal life, it is the gift of a right to eternal life—not the simple bestowment of everlasting blessedness, but the bestowment of a title, a legal and meritorious title, to everlasting blessedness. This legal investiture of the sinner enters into the very essence of the gospel—insomuch that in the act of his forgiveness we behold, not mercy alone, but as in bright and vindicated lustre, the other moral attributes of the Godhead. And accordingly, God is represented not only as compassionate to forgive, but as faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness. Now that Christ has died—now that by His sufferings and His suretiship a full discharge is obtained for us—now that He has not only suffered, but also served in our stead,—the truth and the justice of God are as much committed to the fulfilment of the promises of the gospel, as they were before to the fulfilment of the threatenings of the law. The very attributes which, under the old economy, were the objects of the sinner's terror, are, under the new economy, the firm guarantees of his safety. What then was to him an argument for despair, forms now an argument on which to base his most triumphant confidence. He associates his hopes of coming glory, not with the mercy alone, but gathers strength to the bright anticipation from the truth and the righteousness of God; and so the deeply-seated tranquillity that is in him rests on this solid foundation—the entire and unbroken character of the Deity.

9. The distinction on which we now insist is something more than a verbal or a scholastic one. It is not by an act of simple forgiveness, but of forgiveness consecrated in the blood of a satisfying atonement—it is only thus we feel that the dignity of the Lawgiver can be reconciled with the acceptance of those who have trampled on the law. We cannot with confidence affirm on our imperfect knowledge of the Divine nature, that a dispensation of mercy or any other principle would have been absolutely at variance with the constitution and character of the Godhead; but we may at least affirm, on the intimate experience we have of our own nature, that it would have been at variance with all which conscience suggests respecting the authority of the law, and the truth and unchangeableness of the

Lawgiver. In other words, the scheme of salvation in the gospel seems the only one by which to meet and to appease the demands of our moral nature; and the more profoundly it is reflected on, the more we are persuaded will it be found to tally with the conscience and the constitution which God hath given to us. It is the only scheme which brings the offers of mercy to the sinner into practical adjustment with what the sinner himself feels imperatively due to the holiness and the justice of God; and without this adjustment, we feel assured that even the most authoritative declarations of mercy by a revelation from without, would have been met by the misgivings of our own moral nature from within. After the achievement of so mighty a practical benefit as this, it is of less importance to tell you of any speculative adjustment in the questions of moral science. But we have often felt, when thinking of the doctrine of the atonement, how much the orthodoxy of Scripture was at one with the orthodoxy of that sound ethical system which is espoused by the best and the greatest of our philosophers. A deed of general and unaccompanied mercy would have harmonized with that untenable theory which merges all the virtues into one—representing them as but the modifications of benevolence. The mercy of God as actually propounded in the gospel seems the strongest possible homage which could be rendered to truth and justice, as virtues that had a distinct and independent stability of their own.

10. And on this subject let me advert to the strenuous and unbending assertion of the Reformers in opposition to the Church of Rome—not only that we are justified by faith, but that we are justified by faith alone. It is a controversy charged with highest principle, and the honour of Heaven's high jurisprudence is staked on the doctrine, that no other righteousness than the one righteousness of Christ enters into the matter of a man's justification. This has been well denominated by Luther the article of a standing or a falling Church; and it has been pondered neither with sufficient clearness of perception nor with sufficient depth of principle by those who underrate the importance of it. The truth is, that, by admitting man's obedience by ever so little into the plea for his acceptance, you make the surrender of a great and incommutable principle in the Divine administration. You introduce an ingredient into the title-deed which vitiates and nullifies the whole—you mix the polluted with the perfect; and the security of the sinner's hopes, instead

of resting on a compact and homogeneous foundation, rest, like Nebuchadnezzar's image, on a pedestal that is partly of iron and partly of clay. The whole meaning and moral of the atonement is dissipated by this partitioning of the claim between the righteousness of man and the righteousness of Christ. The completeness, the integrity of the title-deed is essentially violated, and altogether, when the plea for eternity is thus pieced together by a conjunction of the precious with the vile, the composition is such as God, sitting in the capacity of a Lawgiver and Judge, utterly refuses to entertain or to look upon. It is a question depending not on the magnitude of the share which human merit would arrogate to itself—for let this be the humblest fraction, the gospel peremptorily refuses to human merit any share in the matter of our salvation at all. It is a question not of degree but of principle—like the dignity of a great empire, that would resent, with equal energy, the invasion of a province, or the usurpation of a single inch of territory.

11. After the explanations which have been already given, it should be unnecessary to say that when the term justification is employed to express one of the capital doctrines in Christianity, it is used, not in the personal, but in the judicial or forensic sense of it. It has altogether a legal signification, and has respect, not to what the man is in actual character, but to what the man is held to be in juridical estimation. It is not that change in himself, by which he is made a just person; but it is that change in his relation to the law and the Lawgiver, by which he is now reckoned with and treated as a just person. It describes not the man's moral rightness, but his legal right; and however inseparably the two may be conjoined in fact, they ought not on that account to be confounded in idea. Their union does not constitute their unity, and though constantly associated, insomuch that the one is never realized by the same individual without the other going along with it, they are distinct in themselves, and may become the distinct objects of thought.

12. This legal or judicial character extends to the whole effect of Christ's vicarious work in behalf of those for whom He both made an end of sin and brought in an everlasting righteousness. The former benefit He achieved by suffering in our stead, the latter by serving in our stead. Hence two distinct benefits in the statement of which we announce two distinct doctrines—the one being the doctrine of the atonement, the

other the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness. When looked to objectively, they are viewed as two articles of faith; but it will be found that just as each objective thing, whether in nature or revelation, has its counterpart in something subjective—so will it be found of the two distinct objective doctrines which we have now specified, that there obtains a corresponding subjective distinction in two great varieties of human experience.

13. The two varieties of which we now speak may be stated thus:—First, there is one class of inquirers with whom, at the commencement of their religious earnestness, the predominant feeling is the guilt of their past disobedience, and hence a remorse and terror which can only find their relief in the doctrine of the atonement. And, secondly, there is another class whose predominant feeling is for the present rather than the past, hence a sense and perpetual consciousness of the deficiency of their current obedience, and hence a constant but fruitless aspiration after a perfect conformity to God's law, and so a disappointment or even despair which can only find relief in the doctrine of the imputed righteousness. We are far from saying that both of these sensations are not blended together in the great majority, perhaps in all the cases of a translation out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, yet in such various proportions as give rise to a great complexional difference in the history of their conversions between one man and another, and so as to evolve two distinct adaptations in the distinct parts of Christ's substitution for sinners, to the wants and exigencies under which they labour. The subject altogether is worthy of consideration, not merely because adding a new phase or feature, as it were, to that admirable harmony which obtains between the objective and the subjective in Christianity, but because of the lesson which might be educed from it to the dispensers of Christian truth in their pulpit ministrations—seeing that the highest wisdom of their vocation, the wisdom of winning souls, lies chiefly in their being able to give to every man a word in season.

14. But before we proceed to consider the distinction between the two sensibilities of which we have just spoken, let me first acknowledge that, in reference to the vast majority of our species, there is little or no sensibility on the subject at all. We admit that there is a natural sense in every human conscience of a law and a lawgiver. God is regarded not in the light of a Father only, but of a Sovereign and Judge. We are confident indeed,

that throughout our species, the sense of His righteousness prevails over the sense of His benignity and love, and that the hearts of men are far more occupied with the former than with the latter of these attributes. The reason is, that while in the guilt and the darkness of nature, man feels that it is with His righteousness and not with His love that he has practically and personally to do. He looks upon himself more as an object of vindictive justice than of parental regard, and his attention of course is most drawn to that aspect or that characteristic of the Divinity, wherewith himself is personally concerned. Any hope of His mercy is languid and feeble and uncertain, but not so the dread that he has of God's righteous displeasure. He knows himself to be a sinner, and knows that as such, it is with offended justice, and not with mild and pleasing benevolence, that he has principally if not wholly to do. And that aspect of the Godhead which addresses itself to hope, when the weakest of the emotions, will not be so often in the eye of the mind's contemplation, as that aspect of the Godhead which addresses itself to fear, the strongest of the emotions. And so an overhanging sense upon all spirits, which the tasteful representations of meagre and sentimental piety cannot displace, the overhanging sense of God as an offended Sovereign who rightfully challenges the obedience that we have not given Him, and who resents the outrage that we have inflicted on the authority of His law.

15. But we have just been saying that throughout the great majority of our species, there is on this subject little or no sensibility at all. And how then can that be represented as the general feeling of humanity, which among the great bulk of mankind has no existence. The truth is, that in regard to the state of the question between God and man, there is throughout the mass of society a deep and dense and impracticable lethargy. To use a Bible expression, they are not alive unto God. Amid the engrossments of business, they do not think of Him. In the animating converse of their fellows, they lose all sense of the unseen, but Himself, the omniscient witness, who is always looking on. In the rapid succession of these engagements, and convivialities, and recreations, and duties, which fill up the history of the day, God, who registers all, and who will reckon with us for all, is scarcely once from morning till night ever adverted to. The thought of Him may sometimes intrude, but with as little practical and permanent effect as any passing

phantasy of the imagination. There is in this matter a spirit of profoundest slumber—the stillness, and settledness, and apathy of death—the torpid oblivion of hearts steeped in earthliness, and that are never lifted to the God who is above, and seldom or never open to one emotion, whether of curiosity or fearfulness as to the eternity that is before it. The vast majority of men, beset by the urgencies of sense and of time, never cast one look, or send forth one vivid aspiration to the realities beyond them. And how then, it may again be asked, can we offer to analyze the feeling which scarcely exists, and still less how can we report it in your hearing as the general feeling of humanity towards God?

16. Let it be understood, then, when we speak of this general feeling of humanity, we speak not of humanity asleep, but of the general feeling of humanity awakened. The multitude on the broad way are sunk in deepest unconcern about God; and while in this state of dormancy they offer none of those mental phenomena to our observation from which we gather the real sense that humanity has of God. Ere we can ascertain this, that sense must be in some degree awakened; and there is not one even of these reckless, inconsiderate, and altogether alienated creatures, on whom the experiment might not be tried. Let death but look at any one of them in good earnest. Let the last messenger knock at their door and give audible notice of the errand on which he has come. Let the proclamation be but sounded in their hearing, that the Judge is at hand—that they have at length been laid on the bed of their last sickness—or that the stroke by which they have been arrested in the midst of those worldly cares and worldly comforts that wont to monopolize all their attention, is indeed the stroke of death;—let them thus be forced to encounter in thought the realities of the question between them and God; and as they stand on the brink of the eternity for which they have made no provision, let them, when thus torn from every earthly object, whether of desire or of dependence, be made to feel that the God into whose presence they are so shortly to be ushered, is indeed the only Being with whom they have to do. We ask whether any one of these countless millions, when thus forced to the contemplation, would look on God simply as a benign and affectionate Lawgiver without one misgiving thought of the law which they had broken, and the Lawgiver, whom in health they had defied, and before whom in sickness they now despond and tremble?

The situation which we now conceive would bring humanity to the test; and we ask, whether, in the circumstances now specified, it is more likely that they would rejoice in the benevolence, or be disquieted and in terror because of the justice of the Divinity? Would not the thoughts of himself as a sinner, and of God as a being of lofty and unapproachable sacredness, be those which chiefly occupied and appalled him? Whether would the fond imagination of a parent's tenderness, or the suggestion from his own moral nature of God as a righteous Governor—which of these would have the practical ascendency, and be most present to his thoughts? Whether would he feel himself to be more under a parental or under a legal economy, in the hands of an indulgent Father who smiled connivance at his frailties, or in the hands of a Judge and a Governor who should reckon with him for his crimes? Do not all history and all example prove, that, when fully awakened to the question, it is the legal apprehension which lords it over all spirits—that they cannot if they would be rid of the imagination, that there is a law, an eternal and immutable law, which challenges their obedience—and sensible as they must be of a thousand delinquencies, and a thousand defects, that within them they feel the remorse of a conscious guilt, and over them they fear the reckonings of a God of vengeance?

17. Now what takes place at the awakening of a deathbed also takes place in whatever other way the eye of the mind be opened to the realities of its condition. It is not always by means of some striking and outward demonstration that the mind is forced to entertain the question of its state with God. The same thing may happen in the secret workings of a man's own conscience, and without the excitement of any visible occasion. The spirit may be arrested even amid the frolics of childhood, and it has been arrested amid the levities of youth, and it has been arrested in the full career of ambition or guilty pleasure, and it has been arrested among the manifold urgencies of toilsome and engrossing business. But never, will we venture to say, have these topics, these awful topics of God, and the soul, and eternity, been entertained in good earnest, but the sense of a law and of a Lawgiver has been closely implicated with the whole contemplation. In these seasons of visitation God may be called upon as a Father; but He is felt to be a Governor and a Judge. He may be styled the friend and the parent of the human family; but every enlightened conscience

tells that He is seated on a throne of rightful jurisdiction, and that the high state and sovereignty of a monarch belong to Him. The dark imagery of remorse and terror haunts the awakened spirit. It cannot escape, though it would, from a certain fearful sense of an unsettled controversy between it and God. The charges and the penalties of a broken commandment weigh oppressively upon its thoughts; and it sinks under the dreary imagination, that the only prospect for a guilty sinner is an undone eternity.

18. We are aware that the advocates of a meagre and sentimental piety keep all this jurisprudence out of sight. They would contemplate the relation between God and man exclusively in the light of a family relation—where if you had the waywardness of children on the one side, you had the unextinguishable fondness of a smiling and indulgent father upon the other. This may be the religion of poetry, but it is not the religion of conscience, which, we venture to affirm, is never, not even in one instance, fully awakened, but to the view of a broken law, and of a displeased because a dishonoured Lawgiver. You cannot discharge these judicial notions, these judicial apprehensions, from the relationship between God and man; and however often or eloquently He may be spoken of as a God of love, yet none, we aver, has been visited by a real and practical sense of the question, who does not intimately feel Him to be a God of judgment.

19. We have already admitted, of the thousands who are not thus awakened, that they are in a state of total insensibility to all this. The thing never disturbs them, but simply because they never think of it. They are engrossed with other matters; and the din and daylight of this everyday world have cradled them, as it were, into a peaceful and placid oblivion of eternity. They are in a state of tranquillity, we admit, but it is the tranquillity of sleeping men. And, besides, there is a way in which both the law and the Lawgiver may be talked and even thought of, that is made the subject of speculation, without ever becoming the subject of that deep and painful sensibility which we have just spoken of. There may be a tacit delusion respecting the law. There may be the imagination that He has let down its requisitions to the standard of the man's own practice or powers. There may be the flattering idea of a compromise between the indulgence of God and the infirmities of men—of a reduced and mitigated law, in kind accommodation to the

feebleness of humanity. At this rate man might walk through life on a kind of easy and level platform, with his conscience and his conduct on terms of most comfortable equality with each other. He makes the odds even, not by bringing up his obedience to the law, but by bringing down the law to the state of his obedience. And thus, there is many a respectable, and sober, and church-going citizen, who breathes in no other element than that of an unbroken earthliness through the week, and only relieves it by the formal observances of the Sabbath—many such, who on the strength of their decencies and their inoffensiveness, and the moral fairness of their intercourse with their fellows in society—who, when they think of heaven at all, think of themselves as in a very tolerable state of preparation, as if the esteem they had earned among their human companionships below, indicated their full preparation for the companionships and exercises of the upper sanctuary; or, as if having done all that is expected of them here by creatures as sinful and alienated as themselves, they had therefore fulfilled the requisitions of a God of holiness.

20. This subtle delusion, in which so many persist to the end of their days, and so many perish, can only be sustained after all by the blinking of the question. It could not stand its ground against the close and earnest and sustained contemplation of the subject. They who are under its influence only differ from the former in being under the power of two opiates instead of one. To the opiate of sense they have added the opiate of a false speculation; yet sometimes it happens, that both together will not suffice for the tranquillity of their spirits. There are occasions on which the law makes itself heard, and on which conscience responds to its loud and lofty assertion of the prerogatives which it claims. Hence the misgiving and the fears by which through life they often are disquieted; and on their dying bed doth the law at times blaze forth with the dread manifestation both of its lofty demands and its now unescapable terrors—the terrors of a condemnation that, but for some miracle of grace, is fixed and irrevocable—the demands of a moral and spiritual excellence, to which the trembling, because now convicted sinner never once aspired.

21. It is better when the law interposes in time with this manifestation—when conscience is awakened to its lessons sooner, and when in discharge of its office as a schoolmaster, it shuts men up unto the faith, in virtue of that important function which

is ascribed to it in the New Testament, of bringing men to Christ. We feel quite assured, that when men have rightly learned of this instructor, they find that there is something else between them and God than a mere reciprocation of parental fondness on the one hand, and of filial confidence, even in the midst of nature's wilfulness and waywardness, upon the other. They find, in fact, the whole apparatus of a law to be turned in hostility against them—its conditions, its menaces, its denounced penalties when broken, its proffered rewards only in the event of a full and faultless observation. At one time it pursues them with its exactions, at another it holds up to them its own irreparable deficiencies. It haunts them with a thousand disquietudes—not the disquietudes, they are made to feel, of imagination, but the disquietudes of a juster and higher faculty —with the grave and authoritative depositions of moral principle, which at once reproaches them with their delinquencies, and represents them as in the hands of a justly offended God.

22. And having spoken in the general to such a state of mental anxiety and concern, let me now advert to two distinct varieties thereof—for there are two distinct effects which this legal discipline of remorse, and terror, and self-dissatisfaction has on different minds, and from which proceed two distinct and interesting varieties of religious experience.

23. There is one class who have been made to feel the enormity of their past guilt, and who, under the sense of that enormity, feel themselves to be completely overborne. Perhaps in this retrospect of their personal history, there may have occurred some very dark, and therefore memorable passages—some daring impiety, some deep-laid and deliberate seduction, some scheme of perfidy or fraud, which, if known to the world, would banish them from society, and which, though only known to themselves, at least banishes all hope and all complacency from their bosoms —some death which, if not inflicted by a hand of murderous violence, may yet be distinctly traced to the tyranny or the outrageous temper that kept a household in perpetual dismay, and at length sent one or more of its broken-hearted inmates to the grave. Or without any signal or specific act of guilt, a career of guilt, a course of shameful profligacy and foul dissipation, a system of practical iniquity, that, in the pursuit of lawless enjoyment, blended in it both the reckless disregard of a reputation or name on earth, and a reckless defiance to the law of Heaven. Often do we read in the history of human conversions

of an arrest being at length laid on such a desperado in wickedness; and of conscience speaking to his affrighted ear in a voice of thunder, and of his standing aghast before the picture of his own worthlessness; and of his feeling himself to be in the hands of a God of vengeance, and that, between the high authority of a law so sacred, and the outrage of a rebellion so atrocious, nothing awaited him but a wretched and undone eternity.

24. Now, in this state of conviction, were I to describe the condition of the man, I should say that it was not a state of activity or effort, but a state of passive, yet withal of intense suffering. He makes no effort under an overwhelming visitation of this sort, because despair has paralyzed him. When there is no hope, there is no object for his activity, and so he just gives way to the terror which haunts, and to the remorse which agonizes him. When a man sees not how he can better himself, there is no motive, no purpose which can call him to exertion. He sinks under the weight of his despondency, and realizes the description of the psalmist, when wearisome days and nights had been appointed to him. He loses all communion, all sympathy with external things; and this deep, this dreadful endurance of a wounded spirit, he feels to be the foretaste of his coming and eternal agony. Thy billows have overpassed me, Thy terrors have overwhelmed me, Thine arrows stick fast in me—these are but varieties of expression for the mental agony of him, the eye of whose inner man has been at length opened to the demonstration of his guilt, and to the terrors of that appalling vengeance which are to follow.

25. Now what we affirm is, that the doctrine of God's general mercy will not allay this tempest. It will not hush the alarms of an offended justice, of a dishonoured law, of an insulted authority. All the tender and tasteful representations of a Socinian or sentimental theology, will not quell the agitations of a spirit thus labouring under the conviction of its own sinfulness, and of the sacredness of that high and eternal Sovereign with whom it has to do. You may as well think of lulling it to repose among the reelings of an earthquake, or the loud discharges of an impending volcano.

26. It is on occasions like these that the gospel of Jesus Christ makes the most signal demonstration of its efficacy. It is not the assurance of simple pardon that will still the tumults of remorse and terror; but it is of propitiated pardon through the blood of a satisfying atonement. The charm lies there. When the sin-

ner trembles under a sense of his disobedience to the law which a God hath commanded, there is no adequate restorative to his soul but in the sense of that expiation for which a God hath died. It is in the atonement of the cross that he meets with the solution of all his difficulties, and so with the solution of all his fears. It is there, and there alone, where justice and mercy have met in harmony, and where the exercise of the one casts on the awful sacredness of the other its brightest irradiation. When God is seen by us in the face of Christ, He is seen in the brightness of His mercy to the sinful; but it is a mercy so accompanied with holiness and truth—so enshrined, as it were, in the high honours of a vindicated law, as to throw over the character of the Godhead a deeper sacredness than before. In that halo which is over the mercy-seat of Christianity, there is a radiance of all the attributes. Along with the love which gladdens every believer's heart, there is an august and awful majesty to solemnize it; and while in this wondrous spectacle we behold peace to the sinner, yet, seen as it is through the mystery of a world's atonement, we there too behold the evil of sin in most fell and appalling demonstration. While the sinner looked upon all this as the fire of Heaven's jealousy directed against himself to burn up and to destroy, there was but room in his heart for the one affection of single and overwhelming terror. But when seen as it is, averted from us because discharged upon Him who, for our sakes, sustained the agonies of the garden and of the cross, we can look on without the fear of terror, yet it is impossible to look intelligently on without the fear of deepest reverence. But herein lies the exquisite skilfulness of the whole contrivance, if it may be so termed. It is that very aspect in the economy of redemption which serves most to maintain inviolate the sacredness of God, that also serves most to establish on a solid foundation the peace of the believer. It is because under that economy the justice of God has been satisfied and His truth has been fulfilled, and His holiness has had the lustre of an awful vindication poured over it, that these attributes still remain the objects of an undiminished, or rather, of an exalted reverence. But it is just because of this also that these attributes have ceased to be the objects of terror. Instead of frowning in hostility upon the sinner, they now form into a canopy of defence over him. That truth which was formerly staked to the threatenings of the law, is now staked to the promises of the gospel; and if justice require the infliction of death on the un-

repentant and unbelieving transgressor, justice equally requires the bestowment of life eternal on every repentant transgressor for whom the Saviour died.

27. But these observations bear only on remission, which, under the economy of the gospel, is vouchsafed to the believer. But there is something more than a remission granted to him: there is also a reward. And the distinctness of these two privileges must at once be obvious to you. By the one you simply obtain the treatment of an innocent person; by the other you obtain the treatment of a deserving person. By the one there is a deed of acquittal put into your hands, and you can claim an exemption from the threatened penalties; by the other a deed of justification is put into your hands, and you can claim a title to the promised rewards. The one without the other would but place you in the midway state of him who is dismissed *simpliciter* from the bar—it would save you from hell, but it would not certify your admittance into heaven. Now the salvation of the gospel comprehends both these objects; and the justification inclusive of both, effectuates not merely the remission of the penalty that is due to sin, but a title to the reward that is due to righteousness.

28. Perhaps, after all that has been said, I expatiate too much upon this subject; but I am anxious to rectify the lame and imperfect view which many have of the virtue that lies in Christ's mediatorship. It cannot be too distinctly given forth, that the substitution which He underwent for mankind has to do not only with the matter of remission, but that it has also to do with the matter of reward. He not only suffered, but He served for our sakes. He took upon Him not merely the punishment that we should have borne, but He took upon Him the performances that we should have rendered. We thus obtain through Him and through His intervention, not a right to forgiveness only, but a right to positive reward. And if in virtue of His being made our redemption, we can show cause at the bar of jurisprudence why sentence of condemnation should not be laid upon us, we also, in virtue of His being made our righteousness, can plead our title to a place and a preferment among the glories of the upper paradise. In short, to complete the doctrine of that vicarious character which belongs to the mediation of Christ, we must advert to the double exchange which hath taken place between the sinner and the Saviour. He hath taken to Himself the burden of our sins, and borne the whole of

our punishment, and He hath invested us with the merit of His righteousness, and welcomes us to its full reward. He became sin for us though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

29. We have already said that the former of these benefits suited the case and the necessity of him who feels himself overborne by a sense of guilt. He reads in his past misdoing the picture of his own worthlessness. He compares his own evil deserts with the denunciations of a law, under the apprehended power of which, and vengeance of which, he trembles, and is in despair. His heart is occupied with the terrors of the divine justice: and it is not till made to understand how this justice is propitiated by a satisfying atonement, that, lightened from the burden of his disquietudes and his fears, he feels himself quit of his despondency, and at peace with God.

30. But this is only one variety of human experience. There is another which I think more common, and which I would denominate the second great variety of human experience. The first requires for its right and proper fulfilment, a propitiated pardon. The second for its right and proper fulfilment, an imputed righteousness. I think that both of these are proposed to us in the objective truth which Christianity holds out to our view; and I also think that both are needed to meet and to satisfy the wants of the subjective spirit to which Christianity is addressed.

31. For it is not always when a man is first visited by religious earnestness that he feels the burden of an enormous and as yet unexpiated guilt. The first impulses towards Christianity do not always come in this form. There may be strong general uneasiness—a sense that all is not right with him—a pressing conviction that he must undergo a change of state and of habit, for that his present condition is not one that would do to die in. And yet it may not be the view of his past delinquencies which bears oppressively upon his spirit. I should like your attention to this variety in the religious experience of men. There are some with whom certainly, at the outset of their great spiritual revolution, the uppermost feeling is not remorse suggested by a sense of past disobedience, but of dissatisfaction suggested by a sense of their present current deficiencies from the obedience which they know should always be rendered, but which they also know they are always falling short of. They do not feel the weight of the guilt already accumulated; but they are

harassed by the vexatious hourly experience of their constant failures from the law of righteousness. It is as if the window of rememberance was not so clear with those who undergo this, as with those who undergo the former experience—that when they look in that direction they catch but a dull and languid, and therefore unimpressive view of the deeds in their past history. The consideration that theirs had been a life of profligacy and profaneness up to the present moment, or, without anything so glaring as this, the consideration that theirs had been a life of ungodliness up to the present moment, is at times brought home with such appalling conviction to the hearts of some people, as to sink them into the inactivity of despair till this fearful account is brought to a settlement. *Their* pressing necessity is an atonement for sin. Their first demand is release from the debt of condemnation, and the balsam which their peculiar necessity requires is the doctrine of Christ as a surety and as a sacrifice. Now this case is specifically distinct from that of those, who, owing to some variety, it may be, in their mental constitution, are not so haunted by the retrospect of their past deficiencies, yet, nevertheless, are ever labouring under the dissatisfied feeling of their present deficiencies. Their memory is not so awake to that which is behind, as their consciousness is awake to that which is present. The discharge, therefore, of an unsettled account between them and God, is not that which they principally seek after. They are not so much galled by remorse under a sense of their past guilt as they are goaded onward to a fatiguing though fruitless activity, under a sense of their present shortcomings. This gives rise to an important difference of aim and of object between two sets of inquirers; and there is a corresponding difference between the objective truths which should be applied to each of them. The one requires the doctrine of an atonement—the other the doctrine of an imputed righteousness.

32. We read in Scripture of those who seek to establish a righteousness of their own. It is obvious of the people who are thus employed, that they have not been paralyzed into inaction by terror or despair. Wherever there is activity there is hope; for none would labour in quest of an object without the opinion in their mind of their having at least some chance for the attainment of it. The people, then, who set out on the attempt of substantiating a claim to heaven by a righteousness of their own, must not be thinking all the while of the uncancelled debt which

Heaven has against them. They must not look on the guilt of their past iniquities as an impassable barrier in their way. It is probable that some obscure apprehension of God's general mercy, mixed up with an obscure and faded recollection of their own past offences, may explain their tranquillity on this point, and be the reason why they do not seek for the settlement of their account, ere they start anew on a career of positive acquisition. Certain it is there are many who, unencumbered by any sense of their past debts and deficiencies, are labouring to make good a right to heaven by their righteousness, and that in the midst of their perpetual distress from the consciousness all the while that their performances fall immeasurably short of their aspirations and their wishes. Now this we affirm to be a distinct variety from the case of those who, sunk in despondency, can only utter a sense of utter helplessness in themselves, by the question—What shall I do to be saved? They who are thus at a loss what to do for this object, belong to a specifically different class from those who are actually and strenuously doing all they can for the attainment of it. There is an obvious distinction here surely; and what we affirm is, that the distinction is not met—the misery incidental respectively to each of these classes is not met by its counterpart provision, unless the minister, fraught with the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, while he declares to the one a perfect redemption, declares to the other the imputation of a perfect righteousness. The man, overwhelmed under a sense of his disobedience, and so trembling in the prospect of the future hell, and the man striving by means of his obedience to realize the future heaven—these men are in distinct and dissimilar conditions; and there is a corresponding distinctness in the truths or the arguments which should be brought to bear upon them. The doctrine of Christ our redemption is the proper landing-place for the first—the doctrine of Christ our righteousness is the proper landing-place for the second.

33. For without the latter of these two landing-places observe the effect when the man is seeking to establish by his own obedience a righteousness for himself. If he be satisfied with his success, this can only be by a degradation of the standard of the law. If he be satisfied, then his performance is up to his sense of obligation; and this can only be because he has a low sense of obligation. He is not looking to the commandment in its extent, in its exaltation, in the lofty characteristics of spirituality and sacredness which belong to it. His conscience and

his conduct are in terms of most cordial fellowship—the one smiling complacency upon the other. But this is because he has brought his conscience down to the level of his conduct; and hence a peace when there is no peace—a delusive confidence which may be carried indefinitely low in the scale of character. At this rate he makes out a righteousness by which himself is satisfied; but this is not the righteousness by which God is satisfied—and so a fatal tranquillity, which may not be broken up till he comes to die, or not be broken up till the spirit returns to the God who gave it. It was at the sight of the august Lawgiver, that Job, overwhelmed by a sense of defect and disparity, abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes. And such is the conviction that, when ushered into the presence of the Judge, awaits the spirit of every man who has been nourishing through life a deceitful complacency among the empty formalities, perhaps, of religious service, or the decencies and the virtues of a mere terrestrial society. The law will refuse to acknowledge this as an adequate obedience, and will resent as a tenfold outrage on its insulted dignity, that man should challenge the dispensation of its rewards and its honours; or bid Heaven's high majesty pronounce of his wretched offerings that they were good enough for God.

34. But we are not to imagine of every man who seeks to establish a righteousness of his own, that his conscience is on a dead level with his conduct, and hence a placid contentment both with his present state and his future prospects. There are many such whose conscience is greatly ahead of their conduct, and so they are perpetually and most painfully haunted by the sense of a wide and melancholy difference between what they are and what they ought to be. As they multiply their doings, the law is sure to rise and multiply its demands upon them. Their great aim is to equalize the one to the other; but in this they are continually frustrated, and so a state of constant suffering into which there enter at least two ingredients of bitterness—the fatigue of a perpetual exertion, and the mortification of as perpetual a failure. Their constant attempt is to bring up their moral condition to the rules and requisitions of a commandment which is greatly too high for them; and they, baffled by the impossibility, are constantly bordering on despair, yet cannot desist from the enterprise. And what aggravates the severity of this discipline is, that, along with the growing strictness of their moral observances, there is in general a growing moral sensi-

bility; and thus are they all the more painfully alive to the defects even of their more exact and studied obedience. As their conscience becomes more enlightened and more tender, the rigour of the law seems to outstrip the rigour of their most scrupulous conformities. If their exertions become more strenuous, the exactions of the law appear to become more stern than before—as if with every footstep of ascent the heights should rise and retire into still mightier elevations; and the hopeless aspirant views more clearly than before, that there is both a growing altitude and a growing distance beyond him which he can never overtake. It is indeed a most heartless and harassing existence—the existence of one who wearies himself in vain to find the door, and spends his labour on that which satisfieth not. The view of that blissful eternity, to which all his prayers and efforts are directed, is ever receding from him, and the longer he perseveres in this attempt, the darkness thickens around, and both peace and hope stand at a greater distance than ever. The outgoing from this enterprise to establish a righteousness of his own to the discovery of a perfect and sufficient right to heaven in the righteousness of Christ, is like life from the dead. An oppressive burden falls from the spirit, and released from the sore bondage of a task impracticable, the man who has been thus visited walks henceforth at liberty, and enters with new-born alacrity on the free and willing services of gratitude to the Saviour who died for him. It was thus that Luther broke out from the imprisonment which held him, and felt all the charm of a new moral existence in a complete emancipation both from his fatigues and from his fears. The article of justification by faith, dear to him as it was from his own personal experience, gathered a brighter radiance every day from his now larger and juster views of that Scripture the great design of which is to testify of Him who not only made an end of iniquity, but brought in an everlasting righteousness.

35. I promise it, as your pulpit experience, that if only frequent and faithful and impressive in the exposition of this doctrine—the doctrine of Christ's substitution for sinners, inclusive both of the atonement and the imputed righteousness—you will find it the great instrument for turning sinners unto God. It is the only doctrince by which to meet and to allay the misgivings of guilty nature, and by which to substitute in place of all the distrust and despondency which formerly oppressed it, the charm of a felt and confident reconciliation with the Lawgiver whom it

had offended. It is through the medium of this doctrine, and of no other, that we can behold in God the dignity of a sovereign, blended and harmonized with the kindest affection of a parent. There is in it both a most cordial and unbounded welcome to the penitent, and most impressive warning to the presumptuous offender—that which at once overawes the presumptuous sinner, and at the same time encourages the guiltiest penitent to draw nigh. Never was a scheme so admirably devised for reconciling the two great interests of a sinner's comfort and a sinner's holiness; and this must be the great, the favourite theme of your ministrations, if you want both to pacify the consciences and to purify the hearts of your people. It is indeed both the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation—salvation from the future wrath and the present wickedness. Nor will it require any pomp of eloquence, or any elaborate demonstration at your hands. If told with simplicity, and earnestness, and in Scripture phrase, it will find its way into their consciences; and never, be assured, will your voice fall with more welcome acceptance upon their ears, than when, the heralds of a propitiated pardon, and of the gift of a divinely-earned righteousness, you announce that unto them a Saviour has been born.

36. I would have you, in conclusion, to be thoroughly aware, that though it may require a lengthened demonstration—and the demonstration after all not be satisfactory—to show how accordant the doctrine of Christ's substitution is with that academic theology which assigns a truth and a justice and a moral government to God, there is an instant response given to that doctrine by what may be called the theology of conscience. It may require a logical process to bring out in exhibition a presumption or an evidence in favour of the atonement by evincing that without it violence is done even to the theism of the schools; but it is of the greatest practical importance in the work of Christianization, that, independently of any such process, there is an immediate echo to the doctrine by the theism of nature. The conscience that is in men tells them of a truth and a justice, as well as of a benevolence; and that which impresses itself as virtue on the tablet within the breast, is carried upward by a single step to the tablet of the Divine character; and so the general impression of God is that He is the Governor and the Judge, as well as the Parent of the human family, and that there are certain high prerogatives belonging to such a character, which cannot, without the violence of a moral anarchy, be re-

ceded from. And the people, the simple unadulterated people, whom you will preach to in rustic congregations, recognise in the doctrine of the Cross the only adequate homage to that authority which they irresistibly ascribe to the Supreme Being, to that sacredness of which they cannot divest Him. So that without the formality of proofs, grounded on what may be called the jurisprudence of the question, and certainly without that Scripture criticism, the great object of which is not to make the Bible testimonies more impressive, but to repel the sophistry that would cast obscuration over them—without either the one or the other, we say, but by a simple announcement of the doctrine, by the quotation of a single verse from the English Bible, will the doctrine recommend itself to their moral nature, and be the direct bearer of its own pretensions and proofs to the consciences of men. It is this felt congruity, felt as vividly, and perhaps more so, by the peasant than by the philosopher, which gives a mighty advantage to the stewards of the mysteries of God; and you, by the simple exhibition of the truth just as it stands, will experience a wide and a general reception for it. Christianity needs to be argumented for the putting down of infidelity or error. Christianity needs only to be stated for the purpose of producing conversion—there being in the felt correspondence between the matter of Christianity and the subject mind to which it is addressed, the most valid and effective of all arguments.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE PREACHING OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED AS THE GREAT VEHICLE FOR THE LESSONS OF A FULL AND FREE GOSPEL.

1. I THINK that the natural pride of the human spirit has been too exclusively insisted on by evangelical writers, as if it were the sole cause of our resistance to the doctrine of salvation by grace. No doubt it were in the face both of experience and Scripture to deny the operation of this principle. Yet, apart from pride, I think that another cause might be found for self-righteousness, in our natural notions of jurisprudence. The ideas of work and win, of service and its wages, of the performance of duty on the one side, and on the other of a right earned thereby to its promised or stipulated reward—these, viewed as

counterparts to each other, so fall in with our moral apprehensions of the propriety of things, so harmonize with the tendencies of every man's conscience, and, besides, all meet with such frequent verification and fulfilment in the business of society and the ordinary relations of life, that we are not to wonder if, by a prompt and very obvious analogy, they should so often be transferred to the business of our relationship with our great Master in heaven, or that we should so readily give in to the economy of "do this and live," when we set about the object of finding acceptance and favour from our Lawgiver on high.

2. It is my opinion, then, that those writers who have descanted so much on the natural pride of the human heart, as if it formed the only obstacle to our reception of the truth as it is in Jesus, would have given us a fuller and therefore juster account of the matter, would have more nearly met the whole feeling and experience of human nature, had they over and above the natural pride, told us, and as if it were a distinct and additional thing, of the natural legality of the human heart. There are men who have less of the former and more of the latter; and in every demonstration from the pulpit, it is of the utmost consequence that we should make the truth as manifest as possible to the consciences of all, else we might altogether miss the convictions of some, the sympathy of whose intelligence, by the faithfulness of our appeal to their own felt and familiar nature, we might otherwise have carried. Certain it is that this legalism, this mercantile idea of a bargain, this conception first of a prescribed task and then of an obligatory payment upon the execution of it—that all this is most natural, most obstinately and inveterately natural to man. And the disposition thus to negotiate and thus to reckon in manifold transactions upon earth, we have an exceeding aptitude and an exceeding proneness to carry upward and onward to the business of what may be termed our transactions with the sanctuary above. And so, on the first visitation of religious earnestness, it is often our strong incipient tendency, and incipient effort, to win by working, to make good our right to an inheritance in heaven at the hands of the Judge and the Dispenser who presideth there; and that in the way of recompense for the accomplishment of a task which He hath put into our hands, on the footing of a due reward for the due performance in tale and measure, of our prescribed obedience.

3. But on the very first movement in this direction, there is

an obstacle in the way—felt more strongly as an impediment by some than by others of those who have been visited with that anxiety which prompts and prosecutes the question of "What shall I do to be saved?" The burden of their past guilt is that which chiefly weighs upon their spirits. It sinks them into the inaction of despair. They feel all obedience to be vain, because, however perfect, it can only answer for itself, and so cannot both do this and also sweep off or even lighten the irredeemable debt of their bygone iniquities. At all events, and whether they make this calculation or not, they are haunted by a sense of condemnation, against which they can lift up no plea, and from which they can see no outlet. This feeling of an inextricable dilemma is aggravated more and more by every new addition to their mental sight or mental sensibility of the law in its lofty and spiritual and uncompromising character—of God in the high state and dignity which belong to Him as a Judge and a Sovereign—of His attributes, the truth and the justice, and the august inviolable sacredness, all committed to the execution of penalties threatened and proclaimed against the children of disobedience. And, finally, of their own wretched deficiencies, as selfish, earthly, godless, unholy creatures, with their past lives deformed by a thousand palpable transgressions; and, worst of all, their hearts in a state of practical atheism, their every desire full set on the things and interests of the world, and turned, at least in indifference, if not in positive aversion and distaste, away from Him who made all and who upholds all. According to this variety of religious experience, it is the agonizing conviction of sin which adheres to the spirit, and festers there like an arrow sticking fast. Doubtless it is the Spirit of God who begins and carries forward this mental discipline in all who are exercised thereby to the eventual saving of their souls. But the natural conscience, as a fit receptacle for His demonstrations, comes into ready coalescence therewith. Under its workings he can make no escape from the contemplation, either of God as an avenger, or of himself as the hopeless and helpless subject of a righteous sentence, by which his eternity is undone. A naked and gratuitous proclamation would not lay this storm. The misgivings even of one's own natural jurisprudence would not be quelled nor appeased by it. If in preaching the law, you have at all succeeded in awakening the right sense of God, as a God of unchangeable sacredness, then something else than a bare deed of forgiveness is required to meet the demands and

aspirations of a moral nature, thus made alive to the prerogatives of that throne which is in heaven, and to the high state and sovereignty of Him who sitteth thereon. The problem is still unresolved. The perplexities of the lost and agitated spirit are still left without solution, and without an outgoing. To its apprehension there is still a bar, an insuperable bar, between the sinner and the God whom he has offended—precluding all activity because it precludes all hope. The inflexible word, the outraged authority, the attributes which cannot be mocked, the government which cannot be defied or trampled on with impunity, the incommutable sanctions of a law which must either be obeyed or vindicated—these are ever present to the mind of this conscience-stricken sinner, and altogether lay a frowning interdict upon His approaches to God, standing as they do like moral impossibilities in the way of his reconciliation.

4. It is to the sinner who is thus exercised, that the doctrine of the atonement bears a special adaptation. It is this part of His substitution—His vicarious suffering as apart from His vicarious service—which forms the suitable, the counterpart remedy, for that form of spiritual distress which I have now been setting forth. The sense of guilt, the dread of its corresponding penalty—if these form the main ingredients of the sinner's wretchedness, then it were the right appliance, an effectual sanative, could he be made to believe, that all this guilt has been taken off because transferred to another, and that all its punishment has by that other been fully and conclusively borne. In other words, it is not the mediation of Christ in general, nor any other part of it than just His sacrifice, which exerts the peculiar charm of dissolving and clearing away the mental agony of him who labours under the fearful sense of his own worthlessness, and is in terror for the vengeance of an angry God. It is the doctrine of Christ made sin for him, of Christ suffering in his stead—it is faith in this doctrine, or faith in His blood viewed as the blood of expiation, which allays the whole of this disquietude, and brings the soul out from the envelopment of all its perplexities into a state of enlargement and peace. The one is the specific for the other. It is the sacrifice, and nothing else, which heals the guilty conscience. It is the gospel; but not to speak thus vaguely and generally, it is that one article of the gospel, Christ's atonement on the Cross—it is that, and that alone, which can pluck out the sting of a broken law from the sinner's heart; or, to express it otherwise, the emollient

which stills the waters of this troublous agitation. If I may so speak, there is in it a most exquisite skilfulness for this effect. In whatever aspect the sinner looks on the evil of his condition, there is a corresponding aspect in this great gospel remedy which fully meets and fully provides for it. If the magnitude of his guilt have sunk him into despair, let him only believe, and he will be comforted and reassured by the magnitude of its overpassing expiation. If it be the outraged dignity of the law which makes him tremble, the way to be delivered from his fears is to look on the high and solemn vindication made by Him who, in bowing His head unto the sacrifice, hath magnified that law and made it honourable. Or if it be the thought of God, and of His awful sacredness, which fills him with dismay, still let him lift his eyes unto the Cross, and there he will behold a harmony of all the attributes—the truth fulfilled, the justice satisfied, and that mercy which rejoices over all His works, rejoicing here over all the high perfections of the Deity. It is indeed the only doctrine by which at once the Lawgiver is exalted, and the transgressor of the law is safe—which unites the authority of the commandment with the free and full discharge from all its penalties to him who has broken it—which reconciles the peace of the sinner upon earth with the righteousness that looks down from heaven; so that by one and the same deed of amnesty, He who sitteth upon heaven's throne may be at once a just God and a Saviour. This is truly the adjustment of all difficulties and all fears. It is emphatically the gospel, or good news, which should be habitually sounded from every pulpit, and be placed as it were by the heralds of the New Testament on the forefront of all their demonstrations. This is the great truth which subdues the people under you, the balm and the elixir of every wounded spirit, the word in season to the weary and heavy laden; and on the reception of which, the prisoners of condemnation are loosed from their bonds, and walk forth rejoicing in the emancipation of their spirits, the new-born children of light and liberty.

5. It is well to have preached the law, and so made manifest to the consciences of hearers their own condemnation. From this abyss it is the object of the restorative system propounded in the gospel to recover and to raise them. And I cannot too earnestly press upon your attention, that of this system the first and the foremost article is the doctrine of Christ crucified as an atonement for the sins of the world. I have no adequate ex-

pression for the sense which I have of the primary, the radical importance of this great truth, on the reception of which hinges, as on a turning point, the sinner's salvation. To be with or without a belief in this doctrine, forms the grand alternative between a state of ruin and a state of recovery; and it is mainly of Christ as our propitiation that we understand the two Bible sayings, placed in such emphatic counterpart to each other—"He who hath the Son hath life;" "He who hath not the Son hath not life." With such a conviction you may well believe the anxiety I feel that this great and capital truth, even that Christ died an expiation for the sins of mankind, should, if not at all times formally pronounced, at least be presupposed and proceeded on, in every sermon that you deliver from the pulpit. It is the want or the presence of this doctrine which forms the the main difference between an efficient and a useless Church. The doctrine of man's depravity and guilt has been called the basis of Christianity, viewed as the religion of sinners; and it may be so termed, as being the basis of the sinner's anxieties—those first impulses which lead him to grope his way for a place of deliverance and safety. But the doctrine of Christ as a propitiation for sin is the basis of the sinner's hopes—the great initial truth which first awakens him from the lethargy of despair; and which, as by the removal of a barrier that with all his strength and endeavour he never could have forced, opens up for him a way of progressive holiness, and sets him free for all the aspirations and the efforts of a new obedience.

6. It is when receiving Christ as his redemption he sets forth like a now liberated captive on this way—that his experience, as a practical disciple of that Saviour, convinces him of a larger necessity for drawing out of the fulness of Christ than perhaps he had at first apprehended. He not only feels a perpetual deficiency in his best endeavours, which convinces him that the blood of Christ is indispensable to atone for the shortcomings of his new obedience, as well as for the transgressions of his old disobedience; but that, utterly unable as he feels himself to make out a claim for the rewards of eternity, he must desist from the vain attempt to establish a right by any righteousness of his own, and lay hold of Christ as his righteousness as well as his redemption. The distinction between the two doctrines of the atonement and the imputed righteousness is not scholastic but scriptural, and falls in with a corresponding subjective distinction, which is often presented in human experience.

7. You will fall greatly short in making known to your people the riches of Christ if you but tell them of their forgiveness as being the only effect of His obedience unto death; or tell them not that in virtue of this obedience they are more than forgiven—they are justified. But anterior to the distinction between one part and another of the great mediatorial benefit which He hath achieved for us, you should make them distinctly understand that it is not simply on the footing of a benefit, but of a purchased benefit, made theirs by right as well as favour, that the whole of the gospel salvation is presented for their acceptance. We are thus made sure of God's favour, not by a hold on His mercy or goodness alone, but somehow or other by a hold on His justice also. He is not only merciful, we read, but He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. The mercy we enjoy is somehow or other conjoined with the truth of God—mercy and truth are met together. The peace into which we are translated is somehow or other conjoined with the righteousness of God—righteousness and peace have kissed each other. And again, looking from God into ourselves, heaven is made ours, not alone on the footing of a present that has been given to us, but also on the footing of a right that has been earned—though not earned by us. Jesus Christ paid the penalty of their offences for all who believe in Him; and it were not only a denial of mercy, but a violation of justice, to lay upon them that penalty over again. And Jesus Christ purchased an inheritance of glory for all who believe in Him—so as that they have not only a freedom of entry, but a positive right of entry into heaven; and it were not only the withholding of a kindness, but a positive violation of justice to shut heaven's door against them. True, the whole of this salvation we are invited to partake in, without money and without price; but that means without our money, without any price paid for it by us. Still there were a money and a price given for it—even by Him who is the great Surety and Saviour of sinners, made over no doubt to us in the form of a free offer and a free gratuity; but not till He had most laboriously won, and most laboriously worked for it. Now what I want you to discern and to discriminate, as being of the very essence of the gospel, is, that the salvation which is held out is not of mercy alone, but of mercy in conjunction with righteousness—consecrated and made sure by the atonement which Christ hath rendered—by the everlasting righteousness which Christ hath brought in. I want you to perceive the firmness and strength of those legal

guarantees by which this mercy is upholden, as being a mercy, not by which the law of God has been set aside or overridden, but by which the law has been magnified and made honourable. I want to dispossess you of the frail Socinian imagination, that forgiveness, in the economy under which you sit, is simply and altogether by a movement of good-will on the part of the Deity, without any provision made for the honour and authority of the Divine government, or any homage done to His lofty and unchangeable attributes of holiness, and righteousness, and truth. Doubtless it was the very perfection of goodness and good-will which originated the whole scheme of man's redemption from the guilt and the misery into which he had fallen; but you must not lose sight of it as being such a scheme that it preserves entire the whole jurisprudence of Heaven, and even throws a brighter radiance than before over the entire and unbroken sacredness of the Godhead. I would have you to rejoice abundantly in the sure mercies of David; but never will you realize the emphatic meaning of this expression—never will you know what it is to delight yourselves greatly in that full abundance of peace which is spoken of by the prophet—till, without the misgivings of a conscience which can look unfaltering and undismayed on all the perfections of the Almighty, you feel your hold to be not alone upon His mercy, but also on the justice and the judgment which are the habitation of His throne. When the mercy of the gospel comes our length, it comes no doubt in the character of a gift. But before it came our length, Christ had to purchase it by a costly offering—so that while to us eternal life is altogether a gift from God, let us not forget that it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord; and thus the thing made over to us is not merely eternal life, but the right to eternal life. Not only is it made ours actually, but it becomes ours rightfully.

8. But more than this. A second lesson should ever be urged upon the people, and grounded too on the same single word as the former one. To *justify* implies more than acquittal; and when we are said to be justified, they should be made to understand that a great deal more than a deed of acquittal is put into their hands. Such a deed in fact would only place us in a sort of neutral or midway state. In virtue thereof we could plead our discharge from the condemnation, and so from the penalties of hell; but we could not plead our right of entry into heaven, or that to us there belonged any interest or part in that glorious

inheritance. We should thus be in no higher position than a prisoner when pronounced not guilty, and so dismissed from the bar—better certainly than being a condemned malefactor, but very far short of being an honoured guest, or rather inmate for life in the palace of his sovereign. Now, you should get them to understand the whole extent of that privilege which Christ has won for them. In virtue of the one we are treated as innocent creatures; and so, in the matter of punishment, are let alone. In virtue of the other we are treated as deserving creatures; and so, in the matter of reward, have all the positive blessings of God's positive and everlasting favour conferred upon us. These two parts of redemption are never separated in reality; yet are they different things, and might be made the separate and distinct objects of our contemplation. Both of them are comprised in that verse—one of the most precious in the Bible—which tells of Christ having become sin for us, though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him; or, in other words, tells us what the two terms are of that exchange which, by the economy of our redemption, hath taken place between the sinner and the Saviour—our sins laid to His account, and He bearing the full burden of them; His righteousness laid to our account, and we admitted to the full reward of it. He hath not only paid the debt for us, which He Himself took on, but made over the present to us which He Himself did purchase. Or, still to express it differently, He sustained the load of our imputed guilt, and we are clothed upon with His imputed righteousness—that glorious investiture by which it is that not only the gates of hell are closed, but all the portals of heaven are flung open for us; and we, arrayed in an order of merit, which by Him has been won and by us is worn, become the privileged friends and children of God, the heirs and the denizens of a blissful eternity.

9. But it is well not only to demonstrate the extent of this gospel remedy—it should be further made palpable as a remedy commensurate to our disease in its worst and most virulent form, which is its form of ungodliness. Nor can we imagine aught more decisively encouraging in this matter, than the simple affirmation that God justifieth the ungodly. We learn from this who they are whom God has been thus pleased to signalize, and to confer upon them the exalted preferment of which we have just been speaking. They are the ungodly, or those smitten with the deep-laid and universal plague of our sadly alienated

species. It is needless at present to expatiate on the extent of this foul moral disease wherewith humanity is smitten throughout all its borders, and in each of its specimens, from the loveliest and most accomplished of our kind, to the veriest refuse and outcasts of society—its most abandoned criminals, its most daring and desperate offenders. But though not to the extent, let me speak in brief to the virulence of this disease, to the surpassing guilt and enormity of this ungodliness, it being indeed the essence or deadly virus of all sin, the pith and marrow of which lie in this, that it is a transgression of the law—"the strength of sin is the law"—and which transgression resolves itself into either indifference or hostility to the will of God. We feel as if wholly unable to impress an adequate conception upon you, or indeed to charge ourselves with a sufficient sense and feeling of the turpitude, the exceeding vileness of this indifference to God; or how to portray aright the monstrous, the unnatural attitude of a creature, who, betaking himself to his own will and his own way, positively cares not for the Creator to whom he owes his birth and his being. It might appear a venial offence in our own eyes; but this only proves how deeply we are involved in it, and that ours is a moral paralysis, amounting in fact to spiritual death, and which, as if smitten with the same hereditary taint, and breathing in the same noxious atmosphere we share alike with the men and women of a world which has departed from its God. However lightly we, in the midst of surrounding example and countenance, might estimate the guilt of this ungodliness, let us be assured that it is not so estimated in heaven; but that when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, or looked at through the transparencies of that pure and lofty and ethereal region, it is there seen to be the most grievous delinquency on the face of creation—the great master sin of every fallen, every exiled world, by which this goodly universe is deformed. But ignorant as we are of what is going on in the other departments of nature, we can speak only of our own world—for the redemption and recovery of which, from the degeneracy into which it has lapsed, the restorative economy of the gospel has been instituted; and the very first overture which it makes to the sunken generations of mankind is to justify the ungodly. This is, as it were, the initial or outset step which it takes at the commencement of the process; and if in a former lesson you have already told how high the privilege is of this offered justification, it is well that you should enhance their gra-

titude and wonder still more by telling how low down it is carried—even to the lowest extreme of moral degradation—to that ungodliness which is the parent of every vice, and which even turns the highest virtues of our world into so many splendid deceptions—the frail products of a mere earth-born morality, having in it nought of the sacred, and nought of the celestial, and so only fitted to shed a fleeting brilliancy over a temporary and perishable scene. And yet to this ungodliness, the pregnant source and the great pervading ingredient of all moral evil —to this, the most subtle and most spiritual of all our iniquities, as having taken up its firm and habitual possession in the heart of man, whence it sends forth on the visible history sins of every species, and of every hue, and of every aspect—from that of decent worldliness, to that of desperate, and daring, and declared wickedness;—to this, which might well be termed the great transgression, as standing foremost or at the very head of the catalogue, being a direct violation of the first and greatest commandment, and bearing the most direct reference of any to the God whom we are called on to love with all our strength, and soul, and mind—to this revolt of our affections from Him who sitteth upon the throne, this high treason of the inner man against the majesty of Heaven—even to this ungodliness, whereof every son and daughter of Adam must be conscious as the reigning distemper of his bosom, is the justification of the gospel extended. God justifieth the ungodly. If the privilege might be carried thus far down, well might the message of the Christian salvation be termed the tidings of great joy to all people; for even the chief of sinners, tainted and deformed throughout his whole nature by the chief of sins, has a warrant to lift up his head and rejoice—for even unto him is made the high offer of a perfect righteousness, which he is fully and freely invited to lay hold of. The errand of reconciliation on which you are sent, the proffers of acceptance wherewith you are charged, are not confined to the nearest or best within the reach of your hearing. This errand and these proffers you might sound in the ears of the most distant from God—for even unto him the farthest off in exile and alienation, the voice reaches;—the blessed voice of recall and welcome from the mercy-seat of Heaven.

10. Let me now instance another and very precious lesson that should be urged upon your hearers. It is that sinners are the *immediate* objects of gospel justification. I should exceedingly like that you felt the full force and value of this blessed

ordination. Sinners, even the chief of them, as the ungodly, are the immediate objects; not the objects some time hence, and after they have undergone a certain process, but the objects now, if they will, of justification. The plain meaning is—for a matter so very precious we should like to make as plain as possible—that we do not first cease from our ungodliness and then come to be justified; but by the constitution of the gospel, or according to the scheme of that economy of redemption under which sinners are placed, there is a warrant and a welcome for them to come as they are. We are not saying that they are first to be justified, and then to remain ungodly. That is a wholly different position from ours, which is, that they are not first to renounce ungodliness and then to be justified. What the effect on our character that is to follow after being justified is a different question. Our concern meanwhile, our present concern is with the question, what have we to do now? It were an inversion of the right order, if, in reply to this question, we were to say—First quit you of nature's ungodliness; first be healed of this grievous moral distemper—this hitherto constant and cleaving leprosy of the soul, and then come to be justified. No, this is not the way of it. Hold out justification now for the instant acceptance even of the worst and most worthless among your hearers. Do not call on them first, by dint of hard striving, to pluck this rooted evil from their heart; and after they have so qualified, to receive this justification, this privilege of being dealt with by God as a just and righteous person, to receive it as the result or the reward of their very strenuous and successful exertion. The thing is not so reckoned to them. Make them distinctly understand, that it is not made over to them on the footing of a debt, or of what is due to them for a work done. It is not of debt, but of grace; or, in other words—for as being a vital matter that we are engaged with, a thing of life and death, and on which eternity hinges, you cannot be too explicit; and therefore tell them of this justification, that when the Bible says it is of grace, it means that it is offered to them gratis, and made over to them—if you could only obtain credit for the statement—made over to them, not as a payment, but as a present; not as a thing they have worked for and so won, but given to him that has done nothing for it, or to him that hitherto worketh not. And so, should he just have the courage and the confidence to lay hold of it, it will be to him not a thing that he has earned, but a thing that he has gotten—gotten simply,

gotten freely. It were indeed a mighty achievement could you be any way instrumental in opening their eyes that they may behold the things which are freely given to them of God; for truly there is not a greater initial obstacle in the way of their Christianity, and nothing which serves more to darken and embarrass the outset of it, than the obstinate legal imagination that they must first work for their peace and acceptance with God; whereas God, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, lifts up the ensign of peace in the eyes of all the nations, and bids one and all of us look unto it and rejoice. He stretches out the sceptre of reconciliation, that one and all of us may draw nigh and touch it. He holds out a free forgiveness; and, what is more, as we have already explained, a positive justification, that we may put on as a garment; and then will the righteousness of Christ become our righteousness—even that righteousness which is unto all and upon all who believe. Tell them to believe and it is theirs; that they have it for the taking. And, could they only be made to see this, it were indeed the ushering in of a marvellous light upon their souls—a great and glorious translation from the darkness of nature—the giving way, as it were, of a barrier which stands between the Sun of righteousness in the heavens and the grovelling creatures below, who, mistaking the way of life, have all along been groping for an entrance, and been unable to find it. This life, this eternal life, nay more, a right to this eternal life, and through the righteousness of Christ made ours, is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. When any individual is made so to apprehend it, it is like the lifting off of a veil from his eyes; and when the illumination becomes general, it will be the fulfilment of that remarkable passage which speaks of the lifting off of a covering from the face of all nations. A nation might thus be born in a day; or a congregation might thus be made to experience a great and gracious revival; or a single person, even the ungodliest amongst your hearers, simply on his eyes being opened to behold the free grace of the gospel, might pass by instant translation from the darkness of alienated nature to the light of life—a consummation this mightily to be striven and mightily to be prayed for; till, by a universal shower of grace from on high, the Spirit of God, moving on the face of our moral chaos, shall restore its long lost beauty and goodliness and order to our then enlightened and regenerated world.

11. Another lesson I would have you to impress upon your

hearers is the efficacy of faith; and all the more when so strong as to repose with unshaken confidence in the averments and promises of Scripture, however unlikely of fulfilment to the eye of nature. It was thus that Abram believed in the declarations of God, even in the face of most violent improbabilities. And so it is stated to his commendation, that his was a faith which staggered not at the promise, because of unbelief; but that against hope he believed in hope, and was strong in faith, giving glory to God; counting Him to be faithful who had made the promise, and being firmly persuaded that what He had promised He was also able to perform. It is thus that Abraham by his unfaltering reliance did homage to the truth and the power and the unbounded mercy or grace of God; and what you should call on your hearers to do is to walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham, who is set forth in Scripture as the father of the faithful—the great prototype and exemplar of the faith to believers in all ages; for we are just tried as he was. We are made the subjects of a promise as unlikely and as unhopeful in the eye of nature as ever any that was made to him. We are called on to believe in the face of violent improbabilities too, like those which tasked and exercised the faith of Abraham. But his confidence in the Promiser prevailed over the likelihood of the thing promised; and so ought ours. That God should pass over the guilt of a whole lifetime, and more especially the guilt of our deep and settled ungodliness; that He should not only forgive habitual and most heinous offenders, but even justify; that He should not only remit the penalties which we have incurred as transgressors, but bestow on us the rewards which are due only to the positively righteous; that He should look down with complacency from the throne of His holiness on such sinful and polluted outcasts as we; that God should descend so far as to press on us both a present grace and a future heaven; that both are ours if we will—let down for our acceptance, and brought so nigh that we may have them for the taking, and so as to become new creatures here, and hereafter the denizens of a glorious immortality, to which we might even now look forward as Abraham did when he saw the day of Christ from afar, and was glad; that thus both grace in time, and an unfading glory in the heavens when time shall be no more, should be placed within our reach, and made all our own,—a preferment so marvellous as this, so utterly beyond, or rather contrary to, all our deservings, and therefore alike beyond, nay, contrary to, all our

hopes—the thing seems so great and so extraordinary as to be altogether too great for the comprehension or belief of nature; and therefore it is well for nature to be told—it might, so to speak, help her over her incredulity and her fears—that these mighty and wonderful things, this instant translation to the friendship of God here, and hereafter an exceeding weight of glory in the heavens that fadeth not away, that these are brought within our offer, a most free and willing offer, not because we deserve to have them, but because God desires them for us. It is not because of the glory of our good works that we are evened with these things—that would make them wholly incredible—but for the glory of God's good-will; and did we only think as we ought of His exuberant love and the unbounded generosity of His nature, then would they not be so incredible. Could we be led to hinge the expectation, not on our own worthiness of heaven, but on God's willingness to have us there, and on the faithfulness which hath not only said but sworn it to be His pleasure that we should turn to Him and live; did we but feel our way from the wrong to the right ground of confidence, transferring it from all merit of our own—a foundation this which must sooner or later give way under us—to the ample munificence of God and the infinite merit of His Son, a foundation broad enough and strong enough on which to rest the full assurance of our spirits,—then taking courage from a sense of the firm footing on which we stand, might we lift up our head and rejoice, fixed and unwavering in our hope of eternal life, not because it is a gift that we are worthy to receive, but because it is worthy of that God whose ways are not as our ways, to bestow. On thus looking to the right quarter, might the scales at length fall from our eyes, when we came to rely, not on ourselves but on God, and took full rest to our spirits in the blessed consideration, that His highest glory and our greatest comfort are at one. It was this that upheld the faith of Abraham, which out and out may be viewed as one great act of homage to the faithfulness and the power of God, and withal to that mercy which rejoices over all His works, and in the midst of all His attributes. They were hard and unlikely things which he was called to believe; but in very proportion to the strength of the unlikelihood was the strength of that faith which got the better of them—and the stronger the faith, the more of glory was ascribed to the Promiser. It was this which obtained for the faith of Abraham such favour and acceptance in the sight of God; and did we but

follow in his footsteps, or place the same unfaltering reliance on the promises that he did, we should not be long of exchanging the darkness and distrust of nature for the marvellous light of the gospel.

12. I hold it to be the very essence of good gospel preaching, when you labour by such argumentations to overcome the incredulity of your people, and so gain them over to the faith. And let them not say that they are differently circumstanced from Abraham. It is true that he was addressed by God individually, singled out and spoken to in his own special person, and on his own special account, nay, had his very name sounded forth in his own hearing from the canopy of heaven, and, altogether, as the chosen and declared friend of God, was admitted to the intimacies of such a peculiar and exclusive converse with the unseen Father of spirits, that he could not possibly mistake the application of any promise he heard as being made to himself in particular. But it is not so with us; our only converse with God is through the Bible, brought home, it is true, by the Spirit, whose office it is to make known the Word, but who limits His functions as a revealer to the truths and the informations which are given there. We learn of God, then, only through His own written message, which circulates abroad over the world, and is addressed largely and generally to the human species. In this said message, the copies of which might be multiplied at pleasure, and that in the form of a printed circular to all and sundry of the great family of man; in this document, this communication from heaven to earth, and the bearer of God's will for the world's salvation, there are calls and offers and promises innumerable, exceeding great and precious promises; but how am I to know that I come at all within their scope, or that they are addressed to me in particular? Abraham could be at no loss; for in the interviews of which we read in the Book of Genesis, God held converse with him alone. But the Bible, or, which is the same thing, God, through the medium of the Bible, holds converse with a vast and countless multitude, a mighty host that no man can number, the population of our whole globe: and lost in such generalities as these, what is my precise warrant for transmuting this call universal into a call particular and a call personal? It is thus that with many a reader of the Bible, the vast and the voluminous becomes the vague in the eye of his understanding, and the book in his hand fails to impress itself as a "message unto *thee*." Theology as

a science, or a mere system of general notions, is probably all that he derives from it. Under such a treatment, its most emphatic passages, those which are most pregnant with the encouragements of the gospel, with the assurances of God's love and offered pardon, become pointless and inapplicable. His own individual concern in the book is unperceived, or at least unfelt by him; and as if regarded by one who stands aloof and views it from a distance, possibly all which he gathers from the field of information which it sets before him, is but an inoperative fancy, or at best a hazy and undefined speculation.

13. Nevertheless the Bible, and it is of prime importance that you should make each of your hearers so understand it, is a special message unto thee—as much so as if brought to your door by a special messenger, and placed in your hands in the form of an express letter from the upper sanctuary. Its declaration, and from the mouth of Christ Himself, that he who cometh unto Him shall not be cast out—that is every way as good as a pointed and personal application to each and to every one of us. Its "whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely," that is a message unto thee. Its "look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved," that too is a message unto thee. Its exhibition of the Son of God set forth as a propitiation for the sins of the world, is that also which every sinner who treads on the world's surface has the fullest warrant to look unto and rejoice. Its "he who seeketh findeth," its "he who asketh receiveth," its "come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"—these single out every man, who chooses to entertain the overtures of the gospel, as explicitly and distinctly as did the "Abram, Abram," which fell in articulate language from the sky, single out the father of the faithful. These warrant our setting forth on the pilgrimage of hope with the same firm and assured footsteps that he did, and with as confident an outlook as he had on the city which hath foundations, and whose builder and maker is God.

14. In the face, then, of nature's unbelief, and though under the scowl, it may be, of a misunderstood theology, let me have you make proclamation of a free gospel in the hearing of all, and for the acceptance of all. Every minister of this gospel, as being a steward of its mysteries and a bearer of its precious contents, has the fullest warrant to lay it down for acceptance at every door, and knock for its admittance into every heart. The Sun of Righteousness in the spiritual heavens is as free unto

all as is the sun of nature in the heavens over your head; or, in other words, the pardon and grace of the gospel have by its constitution been placed within the reach, and made as accessible to all, as the light and the air and the water, and any of the cheap and common bounties of a providence that is universal. You are the heralds of a grace as universal. There is not a universal willingness on the part of man—there lies the barrier. But there is no barrier, observe me, from the want of a universal welcome on the part of God. Of this welcome, then, let me have you make an open proclamation in the hearing of every man; and in the name of the God who cannot lie, invite each and every to lay his confident hold on the offered gift, and to partake of the common salvation. Could you but remove the cold obstruction of unbelief from the heart of any individual, or make the scales fall from his eyes, there is really nothing more wanting for the instant translation of him into peace and joy. And when once the covering is lifted off from the face of all nations, the whole world might be converted, and a nation be born in a day.

15. I will not put into a specific form any more of the lessons which I would have you to urge and expatiate on in the hearing of your people. Only be very sure to warn them at all times that this doctrine of full and free grace is in every way a doctrine according to godliness; and that were it preached as fully as freely, then would it be understood of gospel justification, that though it finds men ungodly, it does not leave them so. Their Christianity does not end with their justification: it only begins there. It first justifies us though ungodly, but it does not stop at this. It makes us cease from being ungodly, by turning ungodliness away from our hearts. Preach much and earnestly on justification; but preach as much and as earnestly on sanctification. Give your hearers well to understand that all who are justified are also sanctified; and that while confidence in God's offered reconciliation is the proper outset of Christianity, it is the outset of a new life as well as of a new hope. If by dint of believing we make sure of another habitation through eternity, changing it from hell to heaven, we shall make alike sure of another heart and another moral history in time, changing it from that of an ungodly to that of a godly creature, and living no longer to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and who rose again. To give us some idea how the faith of the gospel can work this effect upon the character, let

us suppose that to its free tender of grace on the one side, there is a willing acceptance upon the other—that God is taken at His word, and, instead of being regarded with jealousy or terror as a distant and inaccessible Lawgiver, that He is beheld as a reconciled Father in Jesus Christ our Lord—that the dark and before impenetrable veil which had hitherto mantled the benign aspect of the Divinity is withdrawn—that the mercy-seat is seen in heaven, not the less to be relied on in its being mercy met with truth—that disclosure is made of the love with its smiles of welcome which beams and beckons there, not the less but the more to be trusted and rejoiced in, that it is a love in full conjunction with righteousness, a love consecrated with the blood of an everlasting covenant, and shrined conspicuous and triumphant amid the honours of a vindicated law. Only imagine a translation of this sort—a translation truly out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, does it not become clear, that, with the light of the gospel in the mind, the love of the gospel in the heart will follow in its train; and the love of good-will in God, when once seen and recognised by us, will surely draw our love of gratitude back again? If we had but the perception, the emotion would come unbidden; or, in the words of the Apostle—If we knew and believed the love which God hath to us, we should love God because He first loved us.

16. But this brings us to the sanctifying influence of the truths which we have propounded in your hearing, and in the belief of which it is that we become both right judicially and right morally. But ere we proceed to this latter part of the gospel remedy, let us consider the nature of that faith on which it is that the whole of the remedy takes effect upon every one who believeth.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE FAITH BY OR THROUGH WHICH SINNERS ARE JUSTIFIED.

1. Regeneration is no doubtful or obscure doctrine of Scripture, and only to be elicited therefrom inferentially or by a derivative process. It stands forth there in the form of a direct statement, broadly and simply on the face of revelation, and in many of its passages. The foremost and most conspicuous of these is the recorded conversion of our Saviour with Nicodemus in the third chapter of John, ushered in with strong averment—

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and, "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The truth thus plainly announced to us is to be found in many other places of the Bible. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 12, 13). And so in other of the New Testament writers:—"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures" (James i. 18). "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word" (1 Pet. i. 23; ii. 2). "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (2 Cor. v. 17). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Titus iii. 5, 6). The Old Testament bears witness to the same thing:—"I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them" (Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26, 27). These are but a few specimens from among many more of our Scripture authority for a doctrine which is interwoven with the whole scheme of Christianity.

2. Now, the notion against which I should like to guard you at the outset of our argument, is that of a partial regeneration, as if the product, the new creature in Jesus Christ, were not wholly of the Spirit of God, but partly at least of man's own spirit—not wholly of grace, but partly of grace and partly of nature. What I want to impress *ab initio*, is, that all which is good and new in the result of this process cometh from above, and that altogether, they make up a whole man, not a man in part, but a man entire, or not a man of whom certain members and faculties are of natural, and certain of supernatural origin; but that all things have been done away, and all things have

become new. In other words, just as the babe in embryo has all the parts and proportions of its full-grown developments, so hath the new-born babe in Christ Jesus, both at its first origin and throughout its subsequent growth, all the counterparts of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. The notion adverse to this, or rather destructive of this, is that of a joint production between man and God—man contributing his part, and God his, towards the fabrication of this moral or spiritual structure. The form which this conception has recently taken is, that the intellect is ours, and so the judgment passing into belief or faith, which is represented as the elemental principle, and hence the antecedent of our regeneration; and that, too, a faith to which the natural faith, or faculties of the natural man are competent. It is strange that such a dogma should have been advanced in face of the clear scriptural sentence, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Yet this is not the only form in which the dogma of a joint production has been propounded. Some would contend that if we only were made to see aright the things of faith, then should we feel of them aright—that if only in virtue of spiritual illumination made to know and to believe the love which God hath to us, then would our love to Him back again follow of its own accord as matter of course and in obedience to the laws of our moral nature; or, in other words, that if the intellectual in man were so renovated as to fulfil its part aright, the emotional would not be wanting to its part, but that just and appropriate feelings in the heart would instantly arise in suitable response to just views of the understanding. Now this latter method of partitioning the work of our regeneration between God and man is in every way as unscriptural as the former; for not only in this great work does the Spirit open the eyes of man naturally blind, but He softens the heart of man naturally hard and insensible—I will take the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. In short, ours is the doctrine not of a partial but entire regeneration—and this without exception or reserve of any sort. It has to do at first hand with the intellectual part of our nature, and it has as directly and as much to do with the emotional part of our nature. In behalf of the former we can appeal to such passages as—"No man knoweth the Father, save the Son shall reveal him;" and, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that whilst thou hast hid these things from the wise

and prudent, thou hast revealed them unto babes;" and, "He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shone in our hearts, and given us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;" and not objectively alone, but subjectively also, for He opens the eyes of the blind, as well as He, by His Spirit, shows them the things of Christ, thus placing truth within the field of their vision, or restoring to them the seeing faculty, as well as presenting them with the objects to be seen: and so in regard to the emotional part of our nature, on which, too, the regenerative power must distinctly operate, in order that we might feel aright as well as see aright. For they who had thus to be made over again, not only had their understanding darkened, but were "past feeling," and so not only had their blindness to be cured, but the hardness of their moral temperament had to be resolved. They behoved to be made a willing people as well as a knowing people—"I will make them willing in the day of my power." And they must be rightly affected as well as rightly informed, so as that while they look on Him whom they have pierced, they should also mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Each of these two products is as entire in itself as it is distinct from the other. If the creative power should be accredited with all the parts of the old man, the regenerative power should be as much accredited with all the parts of the new creature. There should be no partitioning in this matter between nature and grace. If in the first birth nature has done all, in the second birth grace is all in all. It not only translates out of darkness into marvellous light—it creates the clean heart, it renews the right spirit within us.

3. What I have now laid down I would have you to regard and presuppose as the foundation or outset of what follows, and to which I solicit the closest attention from you; for the misconception, or rather the misapplication of the things I am to utter, might lead most grievously astray, both in the work of winning souls at the first, and afterwards of building them up in faith and holiness; and this by betraying you into the very error which I have been just attempting to expose.

4. To begin with the latter of these works, I would have you to understand of the new creature, that although in all his parts

and all his faculties, he be not the partial but entire product of a special operation from above—yet do these parts and these faculties stand as much in a certain relation to each other, and operate on each other as much in a certain order, as to cause that this new creature shall be as much a mechanism, a rightly going mechanism, but still a mechanism, as ever the old man was. Let us be distinctly apprehended here; and for this purpose, let us instance the two departments of our nature, of which we have already spoken—the intellectual and the emotional. To stir up the vicious or wrong affections of the natural man, we have only to place in the view of his mind its counterpart objects. If a drunkard, the mere sight of a tempting liquor will suffice to excite the corrupt propensity. If given to licentiousness, we have only to fill his thoughts with the licentious imagination, to awaken the guilty feelings, and hurry him onward to the guilty indulgence of them. If revengeful, we have but to recall the memory of his foe, in order to inflame his hatred anew, and again to confirm him in all his purposes of retaliation. In all these instances, we have the precedency of sight or thought to feeling—so that when we get the man either to see or to think in a wrong direction, we get him to feel in a wrong direction. Now, let him become a convert to the truth as it is in Jesus, and we shall still have the same sort of precedency or order as before in the working and machinery of the inner man; or it is because of the mind being employed on right thoughts that the heart is occupied with right feelings and right emotions. For example, if now made to know and to believe the love which God has to him, he has but to dwell on this truth, that he may love God back again. We love God because He first loved us, or because we know that He first loved us; and it is when the mind is employed in the believing contemplation of this object, that the heart is warmed with the love of gratitude to our reconciled Father. This is the true process; but it is not true that the man's understanding only had to be enlightened to insure both the steps of it, or that if made to discern aright, he would thenceforward, and as if by moral necessity, behove to feel aright also. For this purpose, it is not enough that the eyes of the man's understanding be opened to the right objects—his heart must be softened and made susceptible of the right impressions. In other words, a regenerative power must be put forth on the whole man—taking in both the intellectual and the emotional departments of his nature. Hence it is an

error on the one hand, to think that if we can only get man to believe, all that is desirable and good will follow as of course; for not only must there be a mind to know, but a heart to feel; and we have neither the one nor the other without the grace of God exerted, not by halves, but extending to the whole of our moral nature, so as to make an entire new creature of us. But it is an error, on the other hand, to imagine of the new creature thus set up, that there is not with him the very same order of feelings and faculties as before, so that for being persuaded to what is right, he must still be presented with motives, and have the right consideration addressed to his understanding,—that either right feelings or right purposes be recalled or kept alive within him. There is often a sad failure here on the part of orthodox ministers, who, after they had set up their goodly, and we should aver, their right system of regeneration, would abandon the product thereof, that is, the new creature or new man, to the mechanism of his own evolutions, leaving it, as it were, to run of itself, without the appliance of the commands or exhortations, or all those urgencies or moving forces which are brought to bear, in the way of counsel, and entreaty, and persuasion, on beings who have a will and a conscience, and all the active or intelligent faculties which belong to our human, though it should be our renovated nature. They seem to forget that the nature when thus transformed, and which may be regarded as a mechanism now renewed and set in order, is still a moral mechanism, and which is operated upon by moral influences just as much, though now to better and nobler ends, after regeneration as before it. Not so did the apostles, who addressed themselves as preceptively to their disciples after conversion as ever they did to them doctrinally or didactically before it. They regarded them still as subjects for remonstrance and admonition, and all sorts of earnest importunity, and dealt with them accordingly. To set up a theological system, however orthodox, and then leave it to its own spontaneous evolution, when it is sure to become as inoperative and still as if it had rusted upon its hinges—this is really not a sufficient discipleship for any individual or any congregation. The objective truths of Christianity may be regarded as forming altogether a magazine out of which to select the weapons wherewith to ply and to operate in the way of motive and enforcement on subjective man, who must not only be taught what he should believe, but told and strenuously bidden what he should do. It is thus that duties

effloresce from doctrines, or precepts from principles, in every epistle of the New Testament. There is nothing in regeneration to supersede this process, its main effect being so to transmute and renovate the whole man as to make him a fit subject on whom to realize the process, and set it prosperously agoing.

5. But the same preceptive, urgent, and admonitory style of earnest appliance and address should be brought to bear upon men even prior to their regeneration. But is not this, it will be asked, preaching to the dead? Yes it is, and there must be a grievous misunderstanding and misapplication of orthodoxy on the part of those whose doctrinal views restrain them from so preaching. Both Christ and His apostles, as well as the prophets of more ancient days, all preached in this way to the dead. Repent and follow me, and even sell thy goods to feed the poor, did our Saviour say to men before their conversion. Repent and be baptized, and save yourselves from this untoward generation, said the apostle Peter to a multitude—all of whom were dead before the delivery of his sermon, and many of whom remained dead after it. The apostle Paul showed to men, from the first outset of his ministrations amongst them, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. And in like manner did John the Baptist tell his countrymen to bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and explained to inquiring publicans and soldiers at large what in particular one and all of them should proceed immediately to do. These did not forbear preaching to men because they were profoundly asleep. The very object of their preaching was to awaken them. They did not forbear preaching to congregations of the dead. The very design of their preaching was to bring them alive. The promise made by God through Ezekiel, I will give them a new heart, did not hinder Ezekiel from bidding the people make new hearts to themselves—for he also told them how to go about it, which is to inquire of the Lord that He might do it for them. It is thus that we unravel the whole of this seeming inconsistency. By the economy of the gospel, ministers exhort their people to what naturally, and of themselves, they have no strength to perform. This, in the eye of the world, or in the eye of mere nature, might appear a glaring absurdity, and so it absolutely would be, were it not that ministers on the one hand, whether they tell men to believe or to obey, should be ever looking for the requisite light and the requisite strength from on high—and were it not that hearers, on the other, while giving earnest heed

to the word of the testimony, should be ever looking in the same direction, both that their eyes might be opened to behold the wondrous things which are contained therein, and that power might be given them to arise and walk in the path of new obedience. Let the statement we have just made be sufficiently pondered, and it will resolve, we might even say, will rationalize this whole mystery of preaching to the dead. He who preaches should give himself wholly, not to preaching alone, but to prayer also, or like the apostles of old, should give himself wholly to prayer and the ministry of the word. He who listens should count it not enough that he hearkens diligently, but he should supplicate, and look, and wait dependingly for that illumination from above, by which it is that the day is made to dawn, and the day-star to arise in his heart. We confess our chief value for Calvinism is founded on this, that it represents God to be all in all, so as to take His grace along with it, and lead men to dependence and prayer from the very outset of their religious earnestness. And our chief apprehension from the denial of it, is lest men should, under the teaching of another system, try to begin the work of conversion in their own strength, and so with a difference of result between the two methods of going to work, which is indicated by this pregnant verse of the apostle James —That "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble." In other words, our chief anxiety for right doctrine is, that men should learn therefrom how to attempt and go about it, when seeking to enter upon or keep by the way of right practice. If their dependence be not wholly upon God, theirs will at best be but an outward and superficial reformation. If they take His grace along with them—as that which originates and carries forward all good within them, theirs will be a deep and spiritual change reaching to the thoughts and desires of the inner as well as the deeds of the outer man. It makes all the difference in the world whether at the outset of our Christianity we begin with performances alone, or with prayers and performances together. And most certain it is that we cannot begin with prayers too early. We cannot date too far back the operation of the Divine grace in the conversion of sinners. Nay, it will endanger our Christianity if we should deny the part which it has in the very first movement from sin unto the Saviour, or rather if we should deny that it wholly originates the movement, or in other words, both sets it agoing and keeps it agoing. This we apprehend to be the right theory; and in harmony with this,

were it asked by any seeking after the right practice, whether the dependence should go before the duty, or the duty before the dependence—we should strongly incline, nay, we should clearly or confidently decide for the dependence going first, if not in the order of time, at least in the order of influence, or of cause and effect. It were tampering most seriously with the process of regeneration, and this too at the place where it was most dangerous to go wrong—we mean the infancy of the process—to overlook the part which God has in it, when assigning the part which man has in it. Certain it is that the Bible recognises God and the agency of His grace among what may be termed the very first rudiments in the work of conversion. It not only tells us that the fruits of righteousness are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God; but it intimates the operation of a heavenly power, with the antecedent which goes before this, where it says that the tree must be made good ere the fruit can be good. And it further tells not only that God makes an obedient, but that God makes a willing people in the day of His power —not only giving the strength to do (Phil. iv. 13), but working in us to will as well as to do of His good pleasure. In like manner, although He bids us make a new heart, He bids us also pray for it—nay, still further back, among the priorities of the operation, it is He, we are told, who pours on the children of grace the Spirit of grace and supplication: and whether it be to make a right intellectual or a right moral state, it is the same. It is He who opens the eyes to behold the things contained in His book. It is He who shines in the heart in order to give the light of the knowledge of His own glory. And He not only opens the understanding, but anterior to the understanding, He opens the heart, as He did that of Lydia to *attend* to the things which were spoken by Paul. It is thus that we are brought to look upward from the first. Pelagianism and Arminianism teach to look downward. The one disciple places his confidence in God, the other places his confidence in self, or confidence in man —and they fare accordingly: the grace bestowed upon the one and withheld from the other, serves fully to account for the respective issues in the spiritual condition of the proud and of the humble.

6. Such are the evils attendant on the doctrine of a partial regeneration. Yet let us not forget that there is a useless and inoperative Calvinism which has its evils also. It is truly possible to survey, or at least to state aright the processes of our

subjective Christianity, and yet practically and personally to have no share in them. There are two things which might be done with the light that is in a man's understanding, or with the inclination which actuates his heart. We might either speculate whence it came, or we might follow the direction and impulse of it. Now, it is possible to do the one, yet not do the other—to be satisfied with the theory, and neglect the practice. Having the former, one might pass for a sound, inflexible, well-built Calvinist, but without the latter, what an inert, unfruitful, and utterly worthless thing it is! The Wesleyan Methodist, himself the subject of a gracious visitation, but who seeks not to know whence it cometh or whither it goeth, having neither the curiosity, nor, it may be, the capacity or clear and comprehensive views of the Calvinist—yet relying wholly on the grace of God, and acting faithfully on the strength given by it, will enter the kingdom of heaven before him.

7. But while we thus contend for a total in opposition to a partial regeneration, let us not forget that it is the regeneration, or as it may be termed, the reconstruction of a mechanism, the various parts and powers of which stand in a given relation, and work in a certain order, whether of control or dependence on each other. The views of the understanding, for example, have the same mastery over the determinations of the will, and the determinations of the will have the same mastery over the deeds of the life and history in the new creature as in the old man. That he should feel aright, we must get him to believe aright. To awaken and keep alive proper emotions in his heart, we must present their appropriate objects to his attention; and we conceive that it is because of the primary and presiding place which belongs to faith in the processes of the regenerated man, that faith has by some had a place assigned to it so anterior and so far back in the process of regeneration itself, as to come before, nay, to originate the process. Hence the erroneous dogma that faith comes before regeneration, nay, is the cause of it; whereas instead of its cause, itself is but a constituent part of it. Men do not, men cannot, believe naturally, and yet we should tell the children of nature to believe, and tell them what to believe—a proceeding which falls as much in with the economy of the gospel, as did the utterance of our Saviour, when He bade the man to whom He administered of His grace and mercy, stretch forth his withered hand. Power came along with His order, and so power comes along with our preaching, when

made effectual by the operation of the Spirit from on high—an operation to which we should constantly look, and should be constantly praying for. As in every other case of preaching to the dead, we should, like the Apostles before us, count for success not on preaching alone, but on preaching and prayer.

8. It argues a miserable confinement of ourselves to but one truth or one topic, when one essential thing so monopolizes our thoughts as to be exclusive of other things equally essential. We concede in full the doctrine of regeneration—of a regeneration extending to all the faculties of the soul, to the understanding among the number, in virtue of which we believe aright, or have the right faith. But this should not hinder our remarking either on the precise nature or proper object of faith; and more particularly should not supersede our telling what man has to believe in order to salvation, and laying before him what the evidence is upon which he should believe. Regeneration does not work faith by impulse, as if by the operation of a physical force. To be of any worth, or in fact to be faith at all, it must be faith upon conviction, and on right grounds of conviction. Regeneration changes a natural into a spiritual man; but it is the prerogative of a spiritual man, that he judgeth all things. It does not supersede intelligence, but purifies and exalts it; and let us therefore attempt an intelligent view of faith, and of what it is that man believes to the saving of his soul.

9. These are certainly too simple for definition; not because of the difficulty we have in understanding them, but because of a very opposite reason; because of the difficulty we have in finding words simpler or more easily understood than themselves, by which to make them more intelligible than they already are. Should we be at a loss to frame a definition of faith, it follows not that for the want of a definition we have no clear outset from which to proceed with an argument upon the subject. It may just prove the direct contrary; that the terms we begin with are so very clear, that no clearer can be found within the compass of human language. The incessant demand of those who may be termed formal logicians, is, that we shall define our terms—a most useful observance in all reasoning, whenever the thing is practicable. But this may not always be possible; and for two reasons very distinct, nay, at the whole distance of the antipodes from each other—either that the term in question is so transcendentally obscure as to be beyond the reach of explanation, or so very plain that none can be found plainer to make it more so.

If the latter be the cause, you will surely allow that there is nothing in the instant use of such a term, even though we should make no attempt to define it, which can at all affect the rudimental character of our outset, as beginning first with that which is elementary, and proceeding onward to the more complex results of the argumentation on which we have entered. Still, however, such may be your attachment to forms, that you insist on our definition of faith, and we may tell you that it is belief, by which substantially no greater progress is made than if, were you to ask for our definition of belief, we should tell you that it is faith. If it can yield any satisfaction, however, let the thing be done; and it may be done variously. We may say, for example, that we have faith in a proposition, when we hold that proposition to be true; or faith in a person, when we hold his sayings to be true sayings. Faith, whether in a proposition or in a person, is the reckoning of him or it to be true, and it is nothing more.

10. Now, though we may not have succeeded in finding a simpler word by which to make plainer the meaning of faith, the word being itself so simple, yet may we defend that simplicity, though we should not improve it, by warding off the additions which theologians have attempted to lay upon it, when on certain occasions they would insist that faith is faith, and something more. For example, when the Bible tells us that we are justified by faith, there are theologians who, to exhibit in greater fulness the sense of this Bible affirmation, would tell us of this faith that it is not faith or belief alone, but faith joined with something else—perhaps with love—perhaps, if not with works, with the principle of works, the purpose, the true and firm purpose, of well-doing, or of new obedience—perhaps with that addition, whatever it is, by which faith, in itself but a simple assent, is turned into consent; or the assent of the understanding turned into the consent of the will. Now, in every argument which has arisen upon this question, and there have been many, we incline to faith in its simplicity, and are convinced that in this way alone can the freeness and comfort and moral forces of the gospel be upholden. We think that a world of light may be poured into all the intricacies of this argument—an argument, however, that need never have been darkened, but for those distinctions without differences which have been multiplied, and with the same effect, as words without knowledge; but we think that all the obscuration which has thus been cast

upon the subject might be effectually cleared away, would we only abide by faith in its simplicity, and just understand faith to be faith, viewed as belief, and nothing more. There is one distinction that we are quite willing to admit—a distinction of which every other conceivable thing, as well as faith, is susceptible, and which does not in the least violate the simplicity of faith; we mean the distinction between its semblance and its reality, or between a real faith and only an apparent one. The Bible speaks of a faith unfeigned, which implies that this mental act, or state, or habitude, admits of the same distinction which everything else does—that is, between the genuine and the counterfeit. There is also another distinction which attaches to faith, as well as to many other qualities, whether of mind or body. It admits of degrees. There may be a strong and a weak faith. It may be like a grain of mustard-seed, or, in the language of the apostle Paul, it may be a faith growing exceedingly. He prayed that God would perfect that which was lacking in their faith; by which we understand, not that love, or obedience, or any quality distinct from itself should be added to supply the lack, but that itself should receive additions, by which faith, in its own proper and unmixed character, might become larger and stronger than before. Neither of these distinctions at all despoils faith of its simplicity. There may be a real or only a seeming faith—that is, a real or only a seeming belief; and there may be a weak or strong faith, which also is a weak or strong belief. But still the faith is belief, and nothing more.

11. There is another word which all admit as being akin to faith, but which I would hold to be identical with faith—and that is *trust*. They who regard the one as but a derivative from or modification of the other, are sadly at a loss, I think, to understand, or at least to make others understand, what the process of transmutation is, by which the first passes into the second, or by which faith passes into trust. I regard the difficulty as one of their own making. To believe, is to hold true—to trust, is to trow, or to hold true also. Let one, whom I believe to be divinely inspired, come forth with the prediction of a future event. I might say indifferently, either that I believe the event will happen, or that I count on the certainty of its happening, or, finally, that I trust in its taking place. There seems no perceivable difference between the believing and the trusting in this instance; though I am sensible that to trust is the expression more frequently employed when an event is predicted, as some-

thing that will give pleasure to myself, or a benefit to be conferred upon myself. In the latter case, the prediction is generally termed a promise; and my faith or belief in its veracity is perhaps more generally called my trust in the promiser, or my trust in his promise being made good to me. I would say of the former, that I believe this event is to take place; while I may say of the latter, that I trust this good thing is to be done for me. Still, with this difference between faith and trust in the names, I can see no difference in the nature of the two. Two distinct events, A and B, might be predicted, and I may in consequence reckon on the certainty of both. There is an objective difference between the things predicted; but no subjective difference, I apprehend, in the nature of the mental acts by which I believe in the eventual fulfilment of both. One of these events, as B, might be some grant or benefit to be conferred upon myself. Objectively, there is a difference between A and B—the one an event in which I have no interest, the other an event which nearly and personally concerns me. But I conceive that subjectively there is no difference between the faith wherewith I look forward—in the one case, to the fulfilment of the prediction; and in the other, to the fulfilment of the promise. I may say, that I believe in the one fulfilment; and perhaps more readily say, that I trust to the other. In both cases I hold the mental acts or exercises to be identical; and whether we call it faith or trust in either, it is belief, and nothing more.

12. As an argument for faith and trust being two different things, some will tell us that the devils believe and tremble. And well might they, even though they believed the gospel, for it was no gospel to them. It held out no prediction, no promise of salvation to them. They, in virtue of their faith, might believe that men were to be saved; but they had no warrant for believing that themselves were to be saved, and so, instead of trusting, they tremble. Let the same document be presented to two criminals, containing a reprieve or a free pardon for the one; and for the other, a ratification of the condemnatory sentence under which he lay;—the first, if he believed it to be an authentic document, would trust and rejoice; the second, if he believed, would tremble. But because of these different effects, you would never say of the believing process in the mind of the one, that it was different from the believing process in the mind of the other, any more, in fact, than of the seeing process by which they discerned the characters of the writing that conveyed to

them the knowledge of their respective destinations. The difference lies in the nature of the things to be believed, and the relation in which the parties stand to them, and not at all in the nature of the belief itself. The trembling in the one case, and the rejoicing in the other, form no constituents of the belief, but are only the effects of it—the effect of an intellectual state, the state of believing, which is the same in both.

13. But this suggests another word of cognate signification to those we have been already considering, and which, when admitted to take part in the controversy, has generally the effect of mystifying and complicating the whole argument. The word to which we advert is *hope*. This has been regarded as a term of compound meaning; the two ingredients of which are expectation and desire—the one belonging to the intellectual, and the other to the emotional department of our nature. In as far as the intellectual part is concerned, it is belief and nothing else; and gets its peculiar name, not from any peculiarity in the mental act, but from the mere *locus standi* of the thing believed —that being in the future, and neither in the present nor the past. Had it been the expectation of a thing to which we were indifferent, it would have been expectation and nothing else. But because the expectation of a thing we like and long for, and from which we look for our own personal gratification when once it is realized, it is therefore denominated *hope*—the object of which is a thing expected, in as far as it is credible; a thing rejoiced in, in as far as it is pleasurable. Let us not, because of this complexity, confound the things which differ, but refer the differences to their proper cause—not in this instance to any difference in the intellectual state, which is purely a state of believing, but to a difference in the emotional state, arising from a difference in the nature or character of the things believed. There is a difference between a threat and a promise, and very different will be their effects on the mind of him who looks with the same confident expectation for the fulfilment of both. In the one case, there will be a compound of expectation and aversion, and hence fear; in the other, a compound of expectation and desire, and hence hope. The fear and the hope are doubtless very different things; but the ingredients of difference between them form no parts of the belief, and are only the effects of it. The difference arises from the nature of the things believed. The belief itself, or common ingredient of the fear and the hope, is the same in both.

14. It is true that our translators of the Bible made *trust* and *belief* in general to signify the same difference that we do—but the difference is only in the objects of the faith, and not in the mental act of faith itself, the one having respect to a proposition, the other to a promise; and there is a corresponding difference of terms in the original—*to believe* corresponding with the Greek πιστεύειν, and *to trust* with ἐλπίζειν. Still the Scripture itself makes no difference in the faith, though the object of it should be the truth of a promise, or the truthfulness of him who had made the promise. The faith of Sarah consisted in this, that she judged Him faithful who had promised; and of Abraham, who against hope believed in hope, that he was fully persuaded that what God had promised He was able (and willing) to perform—giving to God the glory both of His truth and of His power.

15. But are we, by the constitution and terms of the gospel, are we in the same circumstances with Abraham? He is called the father of the faithful; and we are required to walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham. He is obviously set forth as a lesson and an example for us all. There is a description given of his faith in the fourth chapter of the Romans; and its effect on his judicial state before God is stated to be, that it was imputed unto him for righteousness—which righteousness, it is said, will be imputed to us also, if we believe in Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. This belief on our part must be of the same nature with that ascribed to Abraham. Ours will be the same privilege, if ours be the same faith—if we walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham. He believed in a special benefit for himself. He trusted in a promise made to himself, and trusted in the power and faithfulness of Him by whom the promise was given. And the question is, Have we the same warrant for our faith as Abraham? If faith become trust, simply because of the object being changed from a proposition in which we had no personal concern, to one in which we were personally and particularly interested, or to the promise of some distinct and definite good to ourselves—Abraham had ample warrant for such a trust. He had been specially called upon. There was frequent converse held between God and him, with himself and for himself. He was on one occasion—and for aught we know on more than one—singled out from the canopy of heaven by the utterance of his name. When the Lord laid on him the trial of offering up his son Isaac, He said unto him,

Abraham; and when he made full acquittal of himself in the trial, the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, Abraham, Abraham. There could be no mistake here in the application to himself of what was said; and there could be as little mistake in the first recorded interview which the Lord had with Abraham, when He said—"Get thee out of thy country to a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." There could be no misunderstanding here. If faith had better be called trust when the subject-matter of it relates to a benefit promised or predicted for one's-self, Abraham had an ample warrant for so trusting. But what warrant have we, it may be asked, which is at all like unto his?—or how can our trust be educed from our faith? There is no such call upon us as descended from heaven with such force and particularity upon Abraham. There is a book of life kept by God in heaven; but we have no access to know whether our names be written there. There is also a book of God's message from heaven, which reveals something no doubt; but certain we are that our names are not written there. Abraham was called expressly and by name, but we have no such privilege; and still the question remains, where lies the promise or the call to me within the four corners of this volume? I may have faith in every word of it; but what are the words in this book of generalities, sent widely and diffusively abroad over the face of the whole earth—by believing in which I would be trusting in a benefit for myself, or leaning on a promise made unto myself? The devils believe in the truth of that book, yet have no reason for trusting that any good will accrue to them out of it; and just because the salvation propounded there is a salvation not for devils but for men. And this, it may be thought, brings it nearer to my door—and so it does. Yet far short, it may be alleged, of the way in which the offered blessing, both to himself and to his posterity, was pointedly and individually brought home to the door of Abraham. Salvation for men might not be available for me, unless it were salvation for all men—or if only for a part of the species, unless I knew that I formed one of that part. In these circumstances I may have faith, yet have no trust; I may believe, yet, like the devils, may still tremble. But is such really the state of the case? Is there nothing in the gospel message to warrant such an application as that in believing I may

be trusting for myself, and instead of trembling may rejoice?

16. There is not a more important truth in Theology, or at least none of mightier import to each individual of the human race, than that the constitution of the gospel, the very terms in which its overtures are couched and conveyed to the world, do warrant such an appropriation. "Whosoever will, let him drink of the waters of life freely,"—while it takes in all men, carries in it to each man all the significancy and force of a personal application. And so does the verse, "Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved;" and the verse, "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved;" and the verse, "Preach the gospel unto every creature;" and the verse, "Him that cometh unto me, shall in no wise be cast out;" and the verse, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in;" and the verse, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man open, I will enter in and feast with him, and he with me;" and the verse—worthy of the acceptation of all, and from the acceptation of which none are excluded—"Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." We have only given a few specimens out of this treasury of precious things. All the resources of language have been drawn upon for the purpose of sending home the calls and invitations of the gospel—sending them personally and particularly home to each individual of the human family. There is an expression made use of by Paul—"God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." We may have neglected to bear the message everywhere; but certain it is that the message is in itself an address to all—a knock and a solicitation at every door. The gospel regarded as a proclamation of good news is commensurate with the species. Its offers—its gracious proposals of reconciliation with God—its assurances of welcome and good-will—its entreaties, nay, its commands, to return unto Him and He will return unto us, may be laid down at the foot of every man. The gospel is in this respect a full and perfect counterpart to the law. If the commandments of the law carry in them an obligation binding on the observance of every man, the overtures of the gospel carry in them, not a warrant only, but also an obligation alike binding on the acceptance of every man. Such are the terms in which the gospel is proposed to the world, that each man in it is as effectually singled out by them as was the father of the faithful, when "Abram, Abram" was sounded forth to him from the canopy of heaven.

17. Too little has been made of these specializing words, if I may so express it, by which the overtures of reconciliation, besides being diffused over the world at large, are brought pointedly home to each individual. All we ask is, that the same force and import be given to these terms when we find them associated with the calls and invitations of the gospel, that we currently and familiarly ascribe to them when they occur in the converse of our fellow-men. A wealthy and generous benefactor, who should proclaim in the hearing of an assembled multitude—Whosoever comes to my house, shall receive from me there some substantial token of my friendship and good-will, would be understood by all as sending forth a distinct invitation to each and to every. Let the same application be made of the term "whosoever," as uttered by the lips of the Saviour, when, in the New Testament, He sends forth upon all its readers the assurance, that whosoever will, might drink of the waters of life freely. Faith has been called, and rightly, an intellectual act; but that faith may, in this instance, become trust, it needs but an understanding rightly exercised on the meaning of words. If barely told that some men were to be saved, there might be faith without trust. But if told that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved, the faith would instantly and necessarily lead to the trust; or rather let me say, that the faith and the trust would be the same.

18. But other terms have been employed in the management of this discussion, and a new element has been thereby introduced into it. Faith has been defined an assent of the understanding, and the question put, Can this be all that is meant by the saving faith of the New Testament—must not something more be included in it?—For surely it is conceivable that a man might assent to the whole of the Bible as true, and yet fall short of salvation. He might believe, it is argued, that it is a true message of salvation to men, nay, a message individually to himself, and yet he might refuse his compliance with it. Doubtless it is possible that a man should believe an offer to be true, and yet should decline that offer. And why might not the same be exemplified in regard to the offers of the gospel? It is thus that beside faith, viewed as a mere assent of the understanding, it is felt that there must be something else conjoined with the faith. In other words, that there must not only be assent, there must be consent—assent, a thing of the understanding alone; consent, a thing of the will.

19. For any practical object, it is not necessary to go into the metaphysics of this question. Doubtless with many, very many—all indeed who are not avowed infidels, and yet are not converted men—there is something very like an assent of the understanding to the truth of the whole Bible, and yet not a consent of the will to its terms of salvation. Were we inclined to prosecute our inquiry into the case of such persons, or to attempt the analysis of their mental state, we think it not unlikely or impossible to be made out that this assent of theirs is but the semblance and not the reality of a positive belief in the gospel. There might be an indolent and unresisting acquiescence in the proposition that Scripture is a message from God, without any actual or substantive conviction of it. There might be a faith in word, but not in power; and if not in power, then might it well be questioned whether indeed it be faith in reality. We should have dwelt longer on the ambiguous phenomenon of this seeming but inoperative faith—a phenomenon exemplified, we fear, by the great majority of every nation in Christendom—had we conceived with some that faith was anterior to, nay, the parent of regeneration. But believing, as we do, that regeneration is the forerunner of faith—this faith, in fact, being one of the parts or fruits of regeneration—we hold it enough to say, that call it assent if we please, still it is such an assent as will ever be accompanied by consent, nay, as if by moral necessity, will bring the consent along with it. The same regeneration which worketh in us an assent to the truth as it is in Jesus, worketh in us a consent to the whole of His discipleship. It gives not only the discernment to know—it gives also the sensibility to feel; because it operates, not on the understanding only, but also on the conscience and the heart, or operates on the moral and emotional as well as on the intellectual nature of man. It is thus that a question which it were difficult to resolve metaphysically, is resolved practically—that is, in a regeneration which does not its work by halves. This solution is to be found in the work of the Spirit. Unless He had opened the eyes that were naturally blind, there could have been no right faith; unless He softens the heart that is naturally hard, there can be no right feeling. Both must be provided—that is, the seeing eye and the susceptible heart—ere we have a faith working by love. The one brings into view its love of perfect good-will to us in Christ; the other insures the reaction and response of our love of gratitude back again. This

is the right view for going to the pulpit with, because supplying a far better test by which to guide your hearers to a right determination of their state, than can any probing analysis among the mysteries of the human constitution. You can tell them from the Bible what the fruits of the Spirit are—certain palpable characteristics easily found and recognised if they but exist, as love, peace, joy, temperance, meekness, long-suffering; you can urge them on the possession or non-possession of these, and leave their consciences to decide by the broad indications and criteria of Scripture, which has said, that through their fruits ye shall know them.

20. But though faith alone cannot work love, because ere this effect is produced, it must be provided by the Spirit with a heart susceptible of this emotion; and though love cannot alone and of itself spring into existence—for there must be an antecedent faith, worked in us too by the Spirit, and by which we obtain a realizing view of the object to be loved—though these two, we say, the faith and the love, are thus blended and interwoven in the way of cause and consequence, that is no reason why we should not also view them apart, each in its own individuality, and as distinct the one from the other. Faith is still faith, and nothing more; and love is still love, and nothing more—the one a purely intellectual, and the other as purely an emotional phenomenon. Faith is but faith, and love is not a constituent, but the consequence thereof; and love is but love, and faith is not a constituent, but the cause thereof. It is true that the Spirit, as the great parent and renovator of our inner mechanism, is the cause of both. But still it is a mechanism of which faith and love are distinct parts, and so related, that, in the working of this mechanism, faith is the power and love is the product. It is not for the sake of a mere theoretical adjustment that we press this view upon your attention; but it is for the sake of your future preaching—for we do fear that this habit of so blending faith and love, as if they were integral parts of that one and the same belief which is unto salvation, is sadly fitted to perplex and bewilder your hearers by casting an obscuration over the freeness of the gospel. Tell them that by faith and love they are justified; and then they look inwardly after this love, with the degree and sincerity of which they must first be satisfied ere they can attain to a sense of acceptance and reconciliation with God. Tell them that they are justified by faith alone, and that in the righteousness of Christ; and they will

look not inwardly, any more than the natural eye looks inwardly or upon itself when in quest of some object in external nature, but outwardly upon Christ; and when satisfied with the perfect sufficiency of His righteousness, and the perfect sincerity wherewith it is held out for their acceptance—then it is, that in the contemplation of these objective certainties, they attain to the peace and the confidence of a firm settlement with their Lawgiver in heaven. "Wherefore," as in the eleventh article of the Church of England, "that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." We cannot adequately express our sense of its importance, the tenet that we are justified by faith alone, though not by a faith which is alone. This precious immunity of justification is not fetched from within; it is fetched from abroad. We have to go in quest of it out of ourselves, and can only find it in those stable, enduring, and withal objective materials, even the grace and righteousness of a revealed Saviour—of Him who is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever. It is by the objective preaching of His word in all its sureness and simplicity, that faith arises in the mind of your hearers, and that His righteousness becomes theirs—a righteousness offered unto all, and which takes effect and fulfilment upon all who believe. This will not supersede the subjective process of their sanctification; and accordingly, in all the epistles, after the doctrine of a sinner's acceptance is laid down, the precepts of the Christian morality are made to fly as thick as hail on the several churches to which they are addressed. But it is truly good and wholesome not to mix up self with the Saviour in the matter of our justification, and to draw this wholly and exclusively through the channel of faith, or by the mental eye looking singly and outwardly on the righteousness of Christ. It is in this attitude, and when engaged in this contemplation, and cherishing this confidence, that the heart warms with gratitude to the Saviour who died for us, and that on its now softened and susceptible nature all the lessons of practical Christianity can be effectually graven, so as that the obedient disciple, now moulded into a willing conformity with the whole of God's law, becomes a living epistle of Christ Jesus our Lord.

21. We have already said that the terms in which the overtures of the gospel are framed, warrant each man to lay hold of Christ for himself, and thereby to appropriate for his own particular behoof all the benefits which Christ came to achieve for

as many as received Him; nor are we aware of aught that is fraught with more of practical importance in all theology, than that there is a warrant in the objective truth for such an appropriation. Short of this indeed, the seeming offer of salvation which the gospel holds out to the world at large, or as an offer to all, were an offer to none; whereas, according to our view, each man has in the Bible as valid a warrant for appropriation, as if, instead of being what it is, a circular for the whole species, it had been an express message to himself from the upper sanctuary. God is there beseeching him—him, in particular, to be reconciled. God is there laying down a deed of acquittal, nay, of justification, for his acceptance, if he will only consent to take it up. God is there making a tender of the great salvation to him, and it is only by his own neglect of it that he abides what nature made him—a child of wrath—an outcast from God and heaven. Each man is urged, urged with all affection and honesty, to flee from this coming storm, and to take his secure refuge under the ample canopy of Christ's mediatorship. We have said all this already; but it has been said by others, that this doctrine of an individual appropriation, by making the forgiveness of the gospel so free and so accessible to every man, holds out an encouragement and confers a license for Antinomianism, tempting him to sin with the one hand, and to lay hold with the other on a pardon which we represent as so easily to be had, and so fully placed within his reach. Now it will place our cause on triumphant vantage-ground, should it turn out that this faith which leads to individual appropriation, so far from conferring the least sanction or authority on the abuse that would turn the grace of God into licentiousness, is the very faith which forms the most effectual security against it. For, first, it is no faith at all if it be not a whole faith in a whole Bible. It is but a fancy and no faith if it select one part of the testimony of Christ to which it shall adhere and abide by, while, if not positively rejecting the other parts of this testimony, it at least casts them or keeps them out of its habitual regards. Neither Christ nor His word admits of being thus divided. He who believes one of His sayings and blinks another of them, is no believer in Christ at all. He who, because of his faith in Christ as a true messenger from God, believes Him when He says, Whosoever cometh unto me shall not be cast out, believes Him also when He says, Whosoever cometh unto me must forsake all; he who, on the same ground, believes that to him who is in Christ

there is no condemnation, believes also, that he who is in Christ is a new creature. He cannot, in the face of these latter declarations, and of countless others similar to these, such as "Without holiness no man can see God," and, "Be not deceived, the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God," and, "I tell you, nay, unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,"—he cannot, though he would, take to himself the encouragements of the gospel voice, and yet not to take himself the warnings emitted by the same voice, and resting on the same authority. He who appropriates to himself on the right ground the promises of the gospel, will not fail, and on the same ground, to appropriate and apply the precepts also. He who binds himself to the one will as surely bind himself to the other. The man who, because of his merely general faith, keeps the promises at a distance away from him, will just keep the precepts at as great a distance away from him. The appropriating faith lays hold of both. The same light which reveals to him the heaven of Christianity as his future and eternal home, reveals to him the new obedience of Christianity as the pathway which leads to it; and from the moment that he fastens his assured hopes upon the one, from that moment does he enter with resolute and unbending footsteps upon the other. He who hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as Christ is pure. The new prospect sets him on the new way. It would not have this effect were the prospect a vague and general and uncertain one. But just because he appropriates—just because it is a prospect which he cherishes for himself, there is no evading the conclusion that this too is the way which himself must walk in. Those are egregiously out of their reckoning who conceive of the appropriating that it is an Antinomian faith, and that a general faith acts as a security against it. The truth is, that it is all the other way. It is he who desires the open gate of paradise, and looks upon it as his own promised heaven—it is he, and not the other, who betakes himself to the prescribed course of holiness which leads to it.

22. We must say of the view now given that it greatly confirms and endears to us the doctrine of an appropriating faith. It is altogether a doctrine according to godliness; or its influence on practical Christianity, instead of an objection, is wholly an argument upon its side. The faith which appropriates the promises and rejects the precepts of the gospel, is demonstrably no faith at all. The faith which looks hazily and generally at both, keeps the possessor of such a faith at a like distance from

both. He, again, who rightly discerns and firmly relies on the overtures of the New Testament, will recognise in them, and for himself individually, both a promised heaven and a prescribed way; and with both in full contemplation, he enters at once both on the hopes and the preparations of eternity. In very proportion to the brightness of his hopes will be the diligence of his preparations.

23. This was in all its parts exemplified by him, whose procedure we do well to follow as our model, seeing that he is characterized as the father of the faithful, and that we shall share in his blessings only if we walk in his footsteps, the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham. He believed in the promises of God that he should be made a great nation, and that his name should be great, and that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed. But there was a precept as well as a promise in the first call of God to the patriarch. There was a direction given to him, as well as a promise made to him: "Get thee out from thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, to the land that I will show thee"—a hard requisition, that he should break asunder all the ties of nature, all the affinities of near and dear relationship; that he should give up his country and his kindred, and go forth of his father's house, and cast himself abroad on the perils and uncertainties of an unknown land, not knowing whither he went. He took the promise to himself, and giving credit he rejoiced in the hope of its fulfilment—saw the day of Christ, though afar off, and was glad. But he took also the precept to himself, and yielded a present, an immediate compliance with it.

24. And there is an analogy between the case of Abraham and that of all converts to the faith, in every age of the Church. In the outset call of our Saviour upon earth, and in the outset call of every sound teacher of Christianity after Him, there are both an announcement and a bidding—the announcement of things to be believed, the bidding of things to be done. Men are not only told to believe and be saved; they are told to repent and believe the gospel. Sometimes the announcement and the bidding are blended into one, and sometimes they are given separately. Paul in describing his apostolic message says—that he went forth commanding all men everywhere to repent and turn unto God, and do works meet for repentance. And to state the resemblance between Abraham and ourselves more particularly; if he was commanded to depart from his country

and his father's house, we are commanded to depart from all iniquity. If on him was laid the hard injunction of forsaking all that was dear to nature—on us, too, is laid the injunction of forsaking all that Christ, the great teacher and exemplar of righteousness, would have us to forsake: "He that cometh unto me must forsake all." If on Abraham was laid the necessity of a local separation from his kindred and his home, which could only be effected by a victory over himself and his strongest inclinations —on us, too, the demand is made of at least a moral separation from the objects, it may be, of our strongest natural and habitual attachment, and to effect which there must be a like victory over the corrupt inclinations of a corrupt nature. Abraham was bidden get out from his own people, and we also are bidden—Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you. In turning to Christ, we are expressly said to turn from all our iniquities. In short, even at the initial footsteps of that movement which we are called upon to make, there is a sacrifice laid upon us of what is dear to nature, as well as upon Abraham. If the distinction in his case was a valid one between the assent he gave to the truth of certain propositions, and the consent he gave to the authority of certain injunctions, there are the materials of a similar distinction in our case also. If he had not only to believe but to obey —on us, too, beside the presentation of certain truths which we are required to believe, there is a call for our instant obedience.

25. Yet let us not confound things which are distinct, nor think that, because inseparably conjoined, this union of theirs constitutes their unity. Let us attend to the respective parts of the understanding and the will, in the process that we have now assigned both for Abraham and his spiritual descendants. With both there behoved to be an assent and a consent—the one being an act of the understanding, the other an act of the will. Abraham not only believed the truth of God's promise, he consented to obey God's precept, and so took his departure from his country and his father's house. The Christian not only believes the truth and honesty of God's offers in the gospel, he yields himself up to the guidance and authority of His biddings there, and so prosecutes a strenuous departure from all iniquity. Such is the mental history of every true disciple; nor should we be at a loss to discriminate between the respective parts in it of the intellectual and the moral, any more than the respective faculties which have to do with the fulfilment of them.

When I believe in the truth of the gospel offer, this surely is by an act of faith or of assent, an act of the understanding and nothing more. When I yield myself up in obedience to the gospel commandments, this as surely is by an act of consent or act of the will. At this stage of the process let another question be conceived to arise, beside that which relates to the truth of the offer—not, Have I a warrant for believing that the offer of salvation has been made to me in particular? but, Have I any warrant for believing that the salvation offered is now mine, and that I may therefore look hopefully forward both for its developments in my state and history on earth, and for its final consummation in the blessedness of heaven? I beg that you will look at the distinction here between the prior and the posterior belief. The former has respect to the terms and the truth of God's communication. It looks objectively and solely to His word, even as Abraham did when he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; and it gathers thence, and exclusively thence, that an offer of salvation has been made unto me. For the solution again of the posterior question, Am I individually one of the saved? it does not suffice that I look objectively, for something more is involved in it than that which God hath said is true. Agreeably to Scriptures already quoted, I am not one of the saved, unless I repent, unless I follow after holiness, unless I deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, unless I renounce that unrighteousness which shall never inherit the kingdom of God. But to ascertain these things I must look subjectively. And if I want these things, then, though I should believe, and with however firm assent, that on the part of God the offer of salvation has been made to me, yet conscious that on my part there has been no consent, and that therefore the offer has not been received by me, it is impossible that I can believe myself to be one of the saved. Even though Abraham had believed that the promise made to him from heaven came from the God who cannot lie, yet if he had declined the precept and kept at home instead of going forth as commanded, to the land of his posterity, he could not believe that the promise given by God, but not accepted by himself, was ever to be realized upon him. And so likewise under the Christian economy, one may believe in an offer of salvation made to all who will, yet if conscious to himself that he will not and has consented not, he has no ground for believing in the very different proposition that he has any part in this salvation.

26. And yet in the midst of all these varieties, the understanding and the will keep throughout distinct from each other; and whether it be a general faith in the truth of God's promises, or the special faith of their fulfilment personally and particularly upon myself, either of these faiths is a purely intellectual act, or but belief and nothing more. When I recognise God's truth in His offers of salvation, this doubtless is an act of the judgment, and of the judgment exclusively. But it were as much an act of the judgment, should I recognise the certainty of my own individual salvation. It is quite irrelevant to say that there must be somehow consent as well as assent in the matter, for that without consent there can be no salvation. This is very true; but it follows not that consent is therefore an ingredient either of saving faith, or of that faith by which I am assured of this salvation being mine. The first of these faiths works the consent, this consent being a product, not a part of the faith. I first know and believe the love which God has to me, and then I love God because He first loved me. Ere there can be the second faith, the consent must have been already formed. This consent is one of the grounds on which the faith rests, but it is no part of it. To say that consent is a part of belief, because one of the grounds on which the belief rests, is to confound two things which are distinct from each other. It is to confound the reason of faith with the act of faith. What we want is, to assign their own proper functions to their own proper faculties, and thus ward off from our theme the false metaphysics, which, by introducing disorder among the powers and processes of the mind, would cast an obscuration over it. Consent is an act of the will. Faith, whatever be the object of it, is always an act of the understanding. When that object is God's invitation to me in Christ Jesus, it is my faith therein which works my compliance, this compliance being an effect, not a constituent of the faith. When that object is my own salvation, as one of God's now reconciled children, it can only be because conscious of having acceded to the gospel call. My consent or compliance comes as it were between the two faiths, but forms no part of either. It is the effect of the first. As being one of its grounds or reasons, it may be said to enter into the cause of the second. This midway act, this consent, is purely an act of the will; while the faith in which it originates, and the faith to which it tends or in which it issues, are each as purely an act of the understanding.

27. But why this complexity, it may be asked, or this distinction between one faith and another? Is there not an instant peace and joy in believing? Would not the first presentation of the gospel overtures make one glad, and that on the moment of his believing? Are they not tidings of great joy, which, like all other such tidings, make us joyful, just as soon as we give credit to them? Why then tell us of a process, why involve us in feelings of doubt, and difficulty, and darkness by this attempt, which so many a mind is unable to follow, of taking a reflect and introverted view of its own phenomena and its own laws? Must the babes in Christ, or even they who have not yet come this length—must they all undergo this ordeal at the outset of their Christianity, and ere they can enter on it? Is this what we call the preaching of the gospel, or is it the way to expedite the work of Christianization among men?

28. To these questions we feel at no loss for a reply. First, The earnest seeker after peace and salvation has not to undergo the ordeal to which I am now subjecting you, or through which I am now causing you to pass. It is no more incumbent on him at the childhood of Christianity, to take a reflex view of the process by which he is led out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, than it was for him, in the childhood of nature, to look metaphysically or inwardly upon himself, or make a study either of the law of his senses or the law of his mind, that he might be guided aright from the first and feeble glimmerings of infancy to the full-grown intelligence of manhood. Others might make a study of these things, that is, of the mental phenomena and processes; and though even for them it is not so indispensable as it may at first seem, yet might they be all the better qualified thereby for the business of education. The pupils of this education, however, might be all the while looking objectively; and without casting so much as one glance reflexly upon their own spirits, might all the direct processes both of thought and feeling be going on soundly and vigorously there—so as not only to be carried rightly onward in the business of life, but so as with the single exception, it may be, of the science of mind, to be rightly lessoned and carried forward on the right pathway of that advancing scholarship which conducts to the highest proficiency in all the other sciences. And it is even so in the school of Christ. It is with the objective that the learners there have chiefly, if not entirely, to do. I should say, as entirely throughout the infancy of grace as throughout the infancy of nature. It were

wholly out of place to engage either of these with a painful, and to them impracticable scrutiny among the recesses or arcana of their own spirits. But is not this the very attempt that we are now making? Yes; but recollect that you are not only the pupils now, you are afterwards to be the educationists of Christianity; and I therefore will still draw on your continued attention to what might not only enlighten the philosophy of the subject, but serve for regulation and guidance in the work of your pulpit ministrations.

29. Suppose, then, that you have already preached and pressed home the law upon your hearers, and that some one of them, convinced of sin, is under the guidance of this schoolmaster, earnestly and anxiously in quest of salvation, you will now have to preach Christ to him; and this surely is setting forth an object distinct from himself and away from himself. And so God is said to set forth Christ as a propitiation for the sins of the world. This surely is an objective representation; and so, too, when you tell of God so loving the world as to send His Son into it to be the propitiation for our sins, or when you tell of God beseeching to be reconciled, and not imputing unto the world their trespasses. Thus far you deal objectively with your hearers; and in virtue of such terms as "whosoever," or "every," or "any," or "every one of you," in all of which, and others of similar import, the overtures of the gospel are couched; in virtue of which terms, we say, you can isolate each of your hearers, and bring the whole force of these objective representations personally and individually to bear upon him. True, at the very outset he should be made aware—you cannot let him know too early—that while thus freely invited to come unto Christ for pardon and acceptance with God, every man who so cometh must forsake all. From the commencement of your dealings with him, he should be told to count the cost of his Christianity, should be fully and fearlessly told of the sacrifice which it requires, the all things which must be done away, and the surrender of the whole man to the one master, even Christ, who is a commander as well as a witness and Saviour to the people. But there is no more difficulty in saying all this within the compass of one sermon, than within the compass of one verse, in saying what our Saviour did at the outset of His ministry—Repent and believe the gospel. If there be any who are conscious of no desire to repent—of no readiness to forsake all—of no willingness to be and to do altogether as Christ would have them, and who there-

fore could not breathe out in sincerity the prayer—Take me, such as I am, make me such as I should be; if such be the state of any of your hearers, it will necessarily bedim the object which you are setting before them, when you speak of an inviting Saviour and a God waiting to be gracious; it will paralyze the force of these objective representations. A man cannot accept of Christ, or have a rejoicing confidence in Him, at the very time that he is conscious of no wish or no purpose to yield Him an entire obedience; or if he do have such a confidence, it must be on the strength of a delusive fancy, and not of a whole faith in a whole gospel, and therefore in the partial and broken and distorted, not in the clear and full light of the truth as it is in Jesus. Such a consciousness might well forbid any man to accept or to rejoice. But if there be no such forbidding, no such check, no such felt obstacle within, then assuredly there is no such obstacle without, and therefore let the influence of the objective truth have full sway upon us. Let your hearers be told to look broadly and openly forth upon the Saviour. Let His salvation in all its freeness and fulness be pressed upon them; and let nothing stay their hands from laying confident hold upon it. They should not even be restrained by a sense of their utter helplessness in themselves for the required services of the gospel; for even upon this, too, the force of an objective representation might be brought to bear—the assurance of a grace that is sufficient, of a strength that is made perfect in weakness. The Spirit is as free as the pardon is free; and were the whole gospel but rightly understood, it would be seen that there is not the breadth of a straw between an offered salvation and a willing people.

30. We make a mystery of what should be no mystery; or if the speculator will mystify the subject by his darkening metaphysics, the practical seeker after forgiveness and favour should be at no loss how to proceed in this transaction between God and his own soul. He would be at no loss in the analogous case of an offer made by a human benefactor to an assembled multitude, and made, too, in the very terms of the gospel proclamation—that whosoever came to him, or called for him should receive some certain and specified benefit at his hands. There is a perfect warrant for each and every as well as for all, to proceed on this invitation, and the very first footstep of the bidden movement is at once the evidence and the expression of a faith in its honesty. Will you pause for a moment, and look to the

mental state at that instant of time, brief and infinitesimal it may be, between the utterance of the call and the taking of that first footstep—for the point lies here, I think, where we may get at the true metaphysics of our subject. If you will but ponder the matter aright, and from this point of view, you will perceive wherein it is that there lies all the distinction which can possibly be alleged between a general and an appropriating faith. It is obvious that without the general faith, or faith in the honesty of the offer, the first footstep would not have been taken, for there could have been no felt warrant for taking it. The invitation is not sincere; and he who gives it forth is but practising and playing on our credulity; and therefore at such a bidding we shall not move at all. But something more than this general faith is indispensable—a something which, even though we have the general faith, can be imagined at least to be wanting; whether or not, in the real history of any human spirit, such an imagination is ever realized. One might conceive, then, a real faith in the honesty of the offer, while there is no desire for the thing offered. Wanting this desire there will be no movement, just as effectually as wanting the faith there would have been no movement. He may be at once both a generous and a trustworthy person who makes this offer, and he has given it forth in such terms as fully to warrant my faith in it as an offer made to me individually; but then I do not care for the benefit thus held out for my acceptance, nor do I choose to have it. Why, it may, for example, be a gratuitous education, and such an education, too, as, if undergone and received by me, would insure my independence and comfort for life; but I decline to enter on a process felt perhaps to be so irksome and so utterly distasteful, that, rather than submit to it, I will forego all the splendid, however certain and unfailing, results in which it would terminate. It is thus conceivable that there might be the faith, but if at the same time there wanted the desire; or, in other words, if there was the assent, but without the consent, there would be no movement. But grant the consent; and I ask if any addition must be made to what has been already specified in order to warrant an appropriating faith? Do not the terms in which the offer is made—the *any*, and the *every*, and the *whosoever*, and the various other pronouns, distributive or collective, in which the proposal is couched—do not these abundantly warrant the conversion of the general into the appropriating faith, or of my faith in the honesty of the offer into the confidence in my mind

that I have the thing offered for the taking, if I choose to take it? The choice makes all the difference; and in this, it may be asked, must not I look inwardly, then, in order to ascertain the choice, as well as outwardly on the honesty of the offer, ere I can accept of the thing offered, and move forward in the required way for the attainment of it? Not a whit more necessary than it is for the child when an apple is held out for its acceptance, to look inwardly upon itself, and see whether it have made choice of the apple ere it can stretch forth its hand to lay hold of it. Doubtless if there be no such choice, there will be no such motion. But though in order to this a choice must be made, it follows not that in order to this the choice must be looked back upon so as to be formally and distinctly recognised. The reality of such a subjective state, that is, the state of desirousness for the apple, is indispensable to the movement. But its knowledge of such being the state is not at all indispensable. The child's regards are not in that direction at all—not subjective, but objective, not towards itself, but wholly towards the apple, and with the implicit belief, at the same time, of such a *bona fide* proposal on the part of the offerer as to be assured that it will get what it goes for. It feels the inclination, and follows the impulse of it, but without its taking, or its being in the least necessary to take any reflex view of it. And what is true of this simple-hearted child is just as true of any simple but withal desirous seeker after the good of his soul. If he have not the desirousness, he may not care for your expositions of the truth as it is in Jesus, and may not listen to them. But these expositions on your part might be altogether objective, nor is it needed that they should be otherwise. Your business is to set forth an objective Saviour, and, as one of His ambassadors, to call upon men everywhere that they might come unto Him and be saved. Most true that, unless they desire Christ, they will not come to Christ; but though they must have the desire, it is not needed that they go in quest of the desire, and first take knowledge of it ere they obey the impulse of it. This search and entry among the arcana of the inward spirit we leave to the inquisitive theologian, who might make a study, if he will, both of his own processes and those of other men. But we should not lay it on the simple and earnest inquirer after his own personal salvation, groping his way to it, and calling out, What shall I do to be saved? The word in season for him is, that he should look outwardly and objectively. He should be

bidden look unto Jesus, not inwardly upon his own desire, but outwardly upon Him who is the object of desire, and who is altogether fitted to meet and to satisfy it. In thus looking, he may well be convinced that there is an honest invitation. In looking more narrowly, he may be further convinced, and from the very terms in which it is propounded, that it is an invitation to himself. When thus far, he may be said to have given his assent to the offer, persuaded of its truth and honesty, nay, of its having been truly and honestly made to him in particular. But consent, as well as assent, is necessary ere he can be said to have accepted, or, in the phraseology of Scripture, to have embraced the offer; for the Bible, as if to mark the distinction between a general and appropriating faith, speaks of those believers not only who were persuaded of the promises, but who embraced them (Heb. xi. 13). Certain it is that hitherto his regards may have been altogether objective, just as much so as those of the child in our case of illustration; and the same moving forces brought to bear upon the one, and which drew forth his approach to the object held out for acceptance, are brought to bear upon the other, with the purpose, and it should be with the effect, of drawing him to Christ. There is as good and sufficient a warrant for the one coming as for the other. The only difference is, that in the case of the child, there is a visible object held forth which he might come to; whereas, in the case of the convert, the babe in Christ, the promises, or rather the things promised, and which are held out to him, are "seen afar off," and He who hath said, "Come unto me," is invisible in the heavens. But if, in the latter case, the objects to which the movement is made are invisible, the objects from which the movement is made are not invisible; and the visibility of these just makes the movement as palpable to the eye of the senses, and as significant of appropriation, as if it were a movement to Christ in person and still upon earth, assuring every one that "Him who cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Now that He has withdrawn to the region of the mysterious and the unseen, we cannot make the same sensible exhibition of a movement to Him that we could have done in the days of His flesh. But for all ages of the Church hath He said, that "He who cometh unto me must forsake all"—forsake all that He would have us to forsake; and we can still make the same sensible exhibition of a movement in the way that He bids us by what we are moving from, if not by what we are moving to. He

who turneth to Christ turneth from his iniquities. Let him who nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. He who aspires and seeks after the things which are above, withdraws his aims and his affections from the things which are beneath. The *terminus ad quem*, the place of glory in the heavens, and where we shall be for ever with the Lord, lies hidden in the futurity before us, or in the transcendental above us. The *terminus ab quo*, the point of departure upon earth, the evil we are called upon to renounce, the companies and the habits and the ways to which we must bid adieu—these all mark, even to observers here below, the quarter whence we have set out, and so the opposite quarter whither we are tending. They prove the direction to be not earthward; and because the opposite to this, the direction must be heavenward. It was thus with the worthies of the Old Testament before Christ came, and it is precisely thus with the worthies of the New Testament Church, now that Christ has left us. It was with the disciples of the faith then, as with the disciples of the faith now. They were both persuaded of the promises, and they did embrace them; and their way to realize the things promised was to renounce the world, confessing themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth. And we read that the doing of such things declared plainly how they sought a country, not the country whence they came out, but a better country, that is, a heavenly, even the city which God had prepared for them (Heb. xi. 13-16.) This perhaps will make obvious what it is to come unto Christ, and how it is that the movement might be effected even by us of the present day.

31. On these premises it should not be difficult to assign how it is that you, as ministers of the gospel, as the heralds of its salvation, and charged with its overtures and calls—how it is that you should deal with the hearers whom you are addressing. And, first, it seems very clear that you should so isolate them as to deal with each personally and individually. This, as we have often said, is abundantly warranted by the terms of that message from the upper sanctuary, whereof you are at once the bearers and the expounders, and which it is your part so to urge and to advocate as to gain over the compliance with its proposals of as many as possible. It is not a general demonstration of human sinfulness that of itself will subserve the conviction of sin. It is the carrying home the lesson to each, and so convincing each that he is a sinner. Neither is it by a general exposition of the

gospel as a scheme for the salvation of mankind, that it can be made to take effect on any of the species. It is by setting it forth as a scheme for the salvation of each individual man within the reach of your converse, and plying that man with its offers and importunities and earnest invitations. In the language of Peter to the multitude—"Be baptized *every one of you* in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"—should you hold out to every man, for his own special acceptance and behoof, the offered pardon of the gospel—beseeching every man, distinctly and for himself, to receive the grace of God. Thus to isolate and individualize is, with God's blessing, to enhance mightily the effect of preaching.

32. But, secondly, though we begin thus, we do not end thus; for not only do we offer to every one the remission of their sins, but teach, nay warn, every one to repent, for that unless they repent they shall perish; or, rather, we mix up both, both the good news of forgiveness and the necessity of repentance, from the very outset, or in our primary announcement of Christ's gospel—even as our Saviour Himself did—"Repent, and believe the gospel;" or as Peter, on the occasion just quoted—"Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins."

33. If we are saved then by faith alone, and yet without obedience cannot be saved—agreeably to the apostolic affirmation, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord; if faith alone save us, and yet without a holy obedience we shall perish, must not a saving faith comprehend in it both assent and consent—the assent which it gives to the truths of the gospel, the consent wherewith it yields obedience to its lessons? Those who are desirous of warding off from the faith this inroad upon its simplicity, those who are set on maintaining its integrity without mixture as an act of the understanding and nothing more, would fain represent the obedience, or even the consent which gives birth to the purpose of obedience, as but a posterior consequent, not as a primary constituent of the faith. To make this out they tell us of the powerful effect of faith upon the affections, in that it worketh by love, and that love is the fulfilling of the law. In this reasoning they generally confine themselves to one, or at most to two propositions—the first, that Christ died a propitiation for the sins of the world; the second, that Christ hath brought in an everlasting righteousness, to the reward of which all are as welcome as if it were a righteousness which themselves

had worked out, and a reward which themselves had won. Let a sinner but believe that Christ hath died for him, that He hath borne the punishment which himself should have borne, and at an expense of suffering equivalent to the torments of an everlasting hell that, but for the expiation made upon the Cross, would have opened to receive him; that He hath averted from his person the wrath of the offended Lawgiver; and that God in Christ, now a reconciled Father, no longer imputes unto him his trespasses—let this be only believed, and it is argued, that as if by the force of a moral necessity, such a faith will infallibly beget love, even such a love as must germinate, with all the necessity of a physical law, the new obedience of the gospel. There is certainly much of truth and power in this consideration. But we have long thought that the theologians who have most dwelt upon it, have unnecessarily weakened their conclusion by confining the influence of the faith to the influence of but a single truth or single doctrine in the Bible. It is the authority of the Bible which forms the ground or principle of our faith in any one of its truths or doctrines. But this ground is obviously broad enough to sustain our faith in all the doctrines and declarations of Scripture—insomuch that if, on the principle of the Bible being the word of God, you have faith in Christ as your propitiation, you cannot miss having an equal faith in all the other known and clearly revealed truths which lie within the compass of God's written revelation. In other words, if the faith be real, it will be universal—insomuch that a real belief in any one article of the sacred record, and because of its being there, is in itself the guarantee of a like belief in all the other articles which come under notice, and stand forth as legibly and distinctly as does the first to the view of the observer. In contending, then, for the power of faith to generate obedience, why restrict our argument to the operation of a faith in but one truth, even though it be the precious truth of Christ's having died an atonement for sin, when we might call to our aid all the constraining and sanctifying influences of a whole faith in a whole Bible? We may at least be sure of such a faith, that it cannot possibly co-exist with the habit and the purpose of disobedience. A man might be fain to believe that Christ died for his sins, because he reads that Christ died a propitiation for the sins of the whole world; and he, therefore, as one of the world, takes this declaration to himself. And were this the only declaration of Scripture, were the revelation of God to man made up of but

this one sentence, he would be abundantly warranted in making this special application, and so in believing, nay, trusting and rejoicing in the thought that he himself was a forgiven creature. But he could not thus trust or believe in the face of another declaration, That unless ye repent ye shall perish—if conscious to himself that there was no honest aspiration after repentance in his heart, and no work of repentance going forward in his history. Let us look on the Bible as a record of the true sayings of God, and then we must see how impossible it is that there can be a partial faith, or that there can be any such thing as believing in one declaration, and blinking another. Every honest, by which I mean every real believer, must have his eye full upon both; and then the question becomes a very plain one, How can a man be sure of salvation for himself because he believes that Christ died for the sins of the world, if he knows himself to be not a repentant sinner, and also believes that unless he repent he must perish? If for a moment he fancy himself to be sure of forgiveness in virtue of the first declaration, the second should operate as a decisive check on the presumption, and, putting the vain imaginations of a false security to flight, would demonstrate that it was but a fancy and no faith, which for the time had taken possession of him. If God had only said to Abraham, and said no more, "I will make of thee a great nation," Abraham might have instantly and absolutely believed the promise, and been right in doing so. But God did say more. He said, "Get thee out of the country in which thou dwellest, and I will make of thee a great nation;" and then think how impossible it were, that he should believe in the latter clause of this announcement, and not proceed on the former; or that he should trust in the promise made to him, and yet not fulfil the precept laid on him. Now, it is precisely so with the precepts and promises of the gospel. Had this been a record of promises and nothing more, we might have looked only at these promises in the certainty and hope of their coming accomplishment. But it is a record both of promises and precepts; and we, looking at both, cannot possibly rely upon the one, while there is neither a desire nor a purpose, nor a sincere endeavour towards the fulfilment of the other. There is, in the economy under which we sit, both an offer of salvation and a statement of certain things indispensable to salvation, and without which we shall most certainly fall short of it—as the statement, That without holiness no man can see God; and, That if we do such and such things, we shall not inherit

the kingdom of God. We cannot accept of this offer, and at the same time reject these statements. The faith that were capable of such a double dealing with Scripture is really no faith in Scripture at all. A true faith not only takes up with certain parts of the Bible, but deals equally and honestly with the whole of it. The sayings which respect the efficacy of Christ's blood will not gladden it, while the sayings respecting the necessity of turning unto God, and doing works meet for repentance, look hard upon it. The real believer respects both, and proceeds upon both—taking freely the comfort of the one, and taking faithfully the guidance and direction of the other. Paul looking outwardly on the righteousness of Christ, which is unto all and upon all who believe, rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Paul looking inwardly upon himself rejoiced in this—the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the world. His was a strong faith, because resting on a broad and extended basis, the basis of all Scripture. Let a part or parts of this basis give way, and the faith will give way. On the other hand, if it be faith at all, it must be a whole faith in a whole Bible. It is like the casting of a die, which closes and conforms with every part of the mould into which it is thrown. The living Christianity of a man is an accurate and full transcript of the Christianity that is graven on the tablet of an outward revelation. His is not a fragment of Christianity, but Christianity entire—imperfect it may be, but not the imperfection that lies in the want of any essential part—rather the imperfection of an embryo that is not yet matured, but has all the proportions and parts of the future plant or the future man. It were ruinous to our Christianity, did we but believe in the atonement by Christ, and not believe in the necessity of repentance. Such a partial faith as this is destructive to the very being of faith at all. The man who blinks the sayings of Scripture respecting the clean heart and right spirit and new obedience of the gospel, must be destitute of all these things; and, knowing that he is so, will also be destitute of a good conscience. But most assuredly he who thus puts a good conscience away rom him, of his faith has made shipwreck.

34. Now, I hold of those theologians who contend that faith, the proper intellectual faith which consists in believing, and nothing more, have unnecessarily restricted the object of believing to one proposition, viz., that Christ died for my sins. I do not object, you will observe, to the object of their faith being in

this particular form, that He died for my sins—as I hold that the precious terms of *all*, and *any*, and *whosoever*, wherein the overtures of the gospel are couched, abundantly warrant this blessed appropriation. Such an appropriating faith is indispensable indeed to those moral and sanctifying influences upon which they reason, and by means of which they make out their conclusion. It is not the general proposition that Christ died for men, so put as to furnish me with nothing which I can lay hold of and transmute into the special proposition that He died for me; it is not the general, I say, but the special, which has the power of calling forth the love of gratitude in my heart, even that love which prompts the sentiment and the saying of—What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits? There could be no feeling of this sort awakened by the proposition that told me no more than that men were to be saved—leaving it uncertain whether I was one of the men. With no other than the former to go upon, I could not join the Apostle in saying, "We love him because he first loved us;" or, in saying of Christ, "Who loved me and gave himself for me;" and yet short of the faith which can take up such utterances as these, I do not see how it can be a faith working by love, or how there could be a love yielding obedience. The faith, then, upon which they reason, who contend for its sanctifying operation on the heart and life, must be a special and appropriating faith—not the faith of salvation vaguely and generally, but the faith and the hope of one's own salvation. We have no quarrel with this latter way of it, this special and appropriating faith—nay, we contend for it; we press it upon hearers wherever we meet with them; we hold that there is abundant warrant for such appropriation in the objective truth of Scripture, in the invitations, the offers, the calls, which have come down by revelation from above, and which are so framed as to be addressed to all and to every—insomuch that each man, from the very terms in which they are announced, is entitled to view them as pointed specifically to himself, and to proceed upon them accordingly. We know that there are many theologians who think it safer to keep by the dim, and the distant, and the general view of faith, and who stand in dread of the particular, the personal, the appropriating faith, which leads one to trust for himself, and so to rejoice in the promises as his own, lest it should also lead to Antinomianism. Now, in very truth, it is all the other way. He who looks dimly and distantly at the promises, and will not venture to take them to himself,

why, he is just the man who looks as dimly and distantly at the precepts, and will not take them to himself either. He looks vaguely to all, and so he sits loosely to all. He does not take to himself the enouragement of—"Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved;" and as little does he take to himself the warning, that "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." The precepts tell upon him just as little as the promises; and the only fruit of this general faith is, that viewing the whole as a distant speculation in which he has no concern, he will neither rejoice in the one, nor will he bind himself to the other. It is thus that the gospel and he stand aloof from each other, so that neither its offers nor its directions have any realizing, any practical effect upon him. And yet there are theologians who would keep him in this sort of useless and indefinite state, fearful that he should rely too much on the promises, lest he should regard too little the precepts of Christianity. Now, only grant me the impossibility that I should believe in one thing on the ground of my finding it in Scripture, and not believe in everything which I find to be there; or that I should believe in one saying of God because of my confidence in His truth, and yet not believe in all His sayings; and the very reverse will follow of that anticipation, on which it is that so many theologians would keep by their generalities with all men, and refuse to each man the comfort of thinking that he had any share in them. It is thus that they would make the gospel of Jesus Christ graze, as it were, over the heads of the whole species without lighting upon one of them, fearful of transmuting the general into the particular, lest, in closing with the promises, any should put away from him the precepts of the New Testament. But why, in the name of wonder, do they not see how impossible it is, that I in particular should come and drink of the waters of life freely, because such is the invitation held out to every reader of the Bible; unless I in particular shall repent lest I perish, because such is the warning held out to every reader of the Bible; or unless I in particular shall be perfecting my holiness, for told that without holiness no man can see God; or unless I in particular should be prosecuting a strenuous departure from all the vices of a corrupt nature, for told that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Only take in all these, and make of all the same consistent application; and then let your faith be as appropriating as it may, and the more so the better. That particularity of which

so many stand in dread, lest it should engender Antinomianism, is the best guard and guarantee against Antinomianism. Paul could say of the Son of God—Who loved me and gave Himself for me; and so too might each of us, were our faith but real as his was, and as co-extensive as his was with the whole length and breadth of the divine testimony; and in virtue of which he could say—The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. There is no danger in pressing the comfort, or any other part of Scripture, closely upon your hearers, if you but press all the parts of Scripture closely upon them. There is no danger, but the contrary, in faith being as particular as it may with respect to the subject of it—that subject being myself, my own individual self, provided only that the faith be universal in respect to the object of it—that object being the Bible, the whole Bible. Let it not be alleged, then, by those who contend that faith is belief, and something more, or that it is not assent alone, but assent joined with consent, let not any instances be alleged of men having had an appropriating faith by which they took to themselves the promises of the Bible, yet lived in palpable disregard of that new obedience, without which we are expressly told that there can be no salvation. We deny the reality of these instances, because we deny altogether the reality of the alleged faith. Be assured that the man who disregards the express telling that there is no salvation for him who is without holiness, and so makes no effort or aspiration after it, be assured of such a man, and of his seeming faith, that for him there is salvation, because of his reading that Christ died a propitiation for the sins of the world, be assured that this is but a seeming, and not at all a true faith. The man, it is said in the Bible, who believes not the record that God hath given of His Son, makes Him a liar; and the man who believes not the record that God hath given of the necessity of repentance and a new life, makes God a liar; and yet these are the men whom our antagonists would refer to as men having the faith of mere belief, and nothing more, and who undoubtedly fall short of salvation, trying thus to prove that the faith which makes out our salvation, or the saving faith of the New Testament, is belief and something more. The faith which these men profess to have in their own salvation, cannot be a faith grounded on what they have read in the Bible, and resting on the principle that the Bible is the word of God, which they hold to be infallibly true, for here are palpable sayings of the Bible which they live in the

discredit of, and live in the defiance of. The Bible tells us, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven; and after this, where can be the faith of those men, or of what sort can it be, who, though unrighteous, are looking to that inheritance as their own? It may be fancy, but it is not faith, the fond desire of a heaven after death—an idea in their minds which they liked to cherish and sustain and resolve to keep by; but no one would call this a belief, resting on what they have found in a Bible, which they hold to be true. They therefore cannot be alleged as instances of men who have the faith of assent, but not of consent, for truly theirs is no faith at all. They therefore have no right place on the footing of this argument. They are *hors de combat*, and may henceforth be dismissed from all future consideration. Instead of believing God, they counted Him a liar. But it is their own lie, and not His. Let God be true, and every man a liar. The lie is altogether theirs; and which if they do not renounce, persisting in the most ruinous delusion, they will go down to the grave with a lie in their right hand. But then it may be said by our antagonists that we concede as much as they do the necessity of consent ere there can be salvation, of practical confirmity to the bidding—the bidding to repent or to enter on the new obedience of the gospel; and if you admit this to be essential to a man's salvation, this is practically all that we need to care for. I believe that, practically, we are far more at one than many of the parties themselves in this argument seem to be aware of. We are most assuredly at one in regard to the necessity of such a consent, as that a man must, at the time of conversion, have not only assented to the truth of what is said in the Bible, but have consented and yielded himself to the authority of what is bidden there. But it follows not that this consent forms part of his faith in his own salvation. It is a reason for his faith in this, but forms no part or constituent of the faith itself. To view it or talk of it otherwise, is to confound one of the grounds of our faith with the faith itself, an act of the intellect with the objects upon which the intellect is employed. Faith, in its most general form, is belief that all which God hath said in the Bible is true, and in this form there might be no consciousness required of anything distinct from the Bible or out of the Bible. But when I condescend on the particular sayings, then it will depend on what these sayings are, whether my faith in the propositions grounded upon these does or does not require such a consciousness. For example, in virtue of

salvation being tendered in the word of God to all men, I have a warrant for believing that the tender of salvation has been made to me; but then this implies the consciousness that I am a man—a consciousness which the devils cannot have, and so they tremble—a consciousness which I must have, and have therefore a ground for trusting that the offer of salvation has been made to me individually. But surely you would not on this account confound the act of trust with the reason for trusting, or say that the circumstance of my being a man had aught more to do in this operation than merely to supply the ground for that act of trust or confidence which in itself is purely intellectual. In like manner, let an example be given of another proposition varied from the one that has now passed under notice, not that the tender of salvation has been made to me, but that in virtue of the tender being accepted, this salvation is mine, individually mine, and thus a confidence created within me that I am one of the saved. This, too, implies a consciousness, but of something more than that I am a man; for ere I have ground to believe in my own individual salvation, I must be conscious that I am a believing man; or to specify other marks still more palpable, and of which I can take an easier and a readier cognizance, that I am a repentant man; that is, a man turning to God in the way that God bids me when He says, Come out from a world lying in wickedness, and I will receive you—a man willing to be all this, and on the strength of divine grace to do all this, so as to become henceforth a religious man—a man growing in charity and holiness, and all those characteristics without which the Bible tells me that I shall not enter the kingdom of God. Yet you would not say that my consent to all this formed any part of the faith I have in my own individual salvation, or that this faith was assent joined to consent. Without the consent, doubtless there could be no such faith in my own personal salvation, but still the consent is only the reason for such faith, and not a part of it. To say otherwise, is to confound the acts of the understanding with the objects of the understanding—the exercise of the intellect with the materials upon which the intellect is exercised. We have spoken of faith in three distinct propositions. The first is, that all which is in the Bible is true, and faith in this has its distinct grounds to rest upon. The second is, that in this said Bible, the tender of salvation is made to all men, and therefore to me as a man; this also has its own grounds to rest upon, one of them the consciousness that I am really a man.

The third proposition is, that I am one of the saved. This, if a true proposition, has also its proper and distinct grounds to rest upon. That salvation is mine in offer, is the second proposition. That salvation is mine in deed or in possession, is the third proposition, which, like the second, requires a consciousness, and of something more than that I am a man—that I am a man who has realized these characteristics, or is honestly and resolvedly, in the way of God's appointing, bent on realizing these characteristics, without which I cannot, but with which I am taught to feel the assurance that I can and will have a place through eternity in the inheritance of the saints. These are propositions all having their own respective grounds for my faith in them ; but however different these grounds may be, my faith in each of them is but belief, and nothing more. But we have not yet come to close quarters with the real difficulty of the question, and that which I believe has originated the chief misunderstandings that prevail on it. Let me entreat, therefore, your firm hold of the distinction which there is between the second and the third proposition —the one being that the tender of salvation is made to me in the Bible, the other being that I am one of the saved. We think that by a steady hold upon this distinction, the whole of the perplexity might come to be unravelled. But ere we proceed to the attempt, let us endeavour to review the ground we have already travelled through.

35. Let us reassemble the observations already given into a few distinct heads. *First*, there can be no doubt that the gospel message to the world is so framed, and that the terms in which it is propounded are of such an import, and admit of such an application, that every man in the world has a right to entertain it as a message to himself. And if he do thus entertain and proceed upon it, he has the very same warrant that Paul had in saying, that Christ died for me and gave Himself for me. If it be true, and how big with importance the truth is, that a message to the world is a message to every man in it, then might every man accept with full reliance, and for his own special behoof, of the offered forgiveness and the offered reconciliation which are held out through the blood of a satisfying atonement. His faith becomes trust, at least in a real tender of salvation having been made to him, and that not by looking inwardly upon himself—for surely he does not need to ask of his consciousness, whether he be a man—but by looking outwardly on the record, and putting the right construction on the announce-

ments which he reads therein. Indeed, some such personal, some such particular faith, must be the thing that is meant, when we come to treat of the sanctifying influences of faith; for surely no one will allege any such influence, whether from gratitude or from whatever other cause, if I have only the general faith that some men are going to be saved, and have not been made to understand, that a way has been opened for my salvation in particular.

36. But, *secondly*, we hold that those reasoners who try to make out the sanctifying power of this faith, greatly weaken the force of their argument, by resting it on the mere operation of gratitude because of a received benefit. It is most true that this is one of the influences which lies in special and appropriating faith. It worketh by love, though to have this effect there must be the belief that Christ loved *me*, else how can we share in the apostolic feeling, that we love Him because He first loved us? But undoubted and mighty as this influence is, it is not the only one, as becomes obvious when we look to faith in the whole compass and extent of it—not as confined to the one object of Christ having died a sacrifice—not as looking exclusively to this one statement of Scripture, but as looking freely and abroad upon all its statements, so as to make our faith in these tell, not on the love of gratitude alone, but on our fears, for that unless we repent we shall perish; or our sense of the necessity of holiness, for that without holiness no man shall see God; or our desire that the Spirit may be given to us, for unless we have the Spirit of Christ we are none of His; or our endeavours to abound in all the works of the new obedience, for while it is by faith that we are justified, it is by works that we are judged. Faith, not in one only of the Bible doctrines, but in the Bible itself, will comprehend all these sayings, will harmonize them all, will proceed on them all, else it is no faith at all. There is no such thing as believing in one declaration of Scripture, and blinking all the rest, any more than it is possible that with the eye of my body I should be awake to the reality of but one object, and be blind or insensible to all the others within the field of vision. I either have faith in all or have faith in none; and if faith in all, why attach ourselves to but one doctrine for proving that faith must engender obedience? Why not avail ourselves for this purpose of all the influences which lie in all the doctrines which bear upon the subject, and which tell, not on our gratitude alone, but on our

fears, or our sense of interest, or our desires after a present holiness, which the Bible teaches us to associate and to identify with a future heaven? Let such a faith as this have but full and free operation, and then the obedience, instead of being deduced through the strainer of but one article, will flow in one broad and copious stream, because supplied out of many fountainheads, that have all been unlocked by a whole faith in a whole Bible.

37. And, *thirdly*, whether it be yet made out or not that such a faith must work obedience as its necessary and invariable consequent, it should now be abundantly obvious, that without obedience there can be no faith, at least in my own personal salvation. If this appropriating faith have not enough of force and fitness in itself to be the efficient cause of obedience, obedience is at least the *sine qua non* of an appropriating faith. A man cannot believingly apply to himself the promises, when conscious all the while that he is making no honest endeavour to fulfil the precepts of Christianity. Such a consciousness would operate as a check and a preventive on his faith. He cannot, in virtue of his faith, apply to himself the comfort of the promises, without at the same time, and in virtue of the very same faith, too, applying to himself the obligation of the precepts. He cannot rejoice in the certainty that in Christ he will be saved, without proceeding on the certainty, that unless he repent he will not be saved; for if he be not repenting, the one certainty would neutralize, would exterminate the other, and the only way of maintaining the co-existence of both, is to cast all his confidence on Christ, and at the same time give all his energy to the prosecution of the task which Christ put into his hands, when, at the very outset of his public ministry on earth, He called upon men to repent and believe the gospel. If instead of slicing down our Christianity according to the articles, we would take our Christianity entire from the Bible, and become the entire and thorough disciples of every lesson it sets before us, we should feel no difficulty, nor be at all puzzled in harmonizing these things. In particular, it would be not only seen but felt, that an appropriating faith is the direct enemy and extinguisher of Antinomianism, and this just because the right and valid appropriation of one thing in the Bible, insures the appropriation of everything that is there. The stronger and more confident the appropriation, or self-application of the promises, the surer will be the self-application of the precepts; and that property of directing to one's-self the Bible's encourage-

ments, which many are so afraid of, lest it should mark a deceitful security without obedience, is the very property which we hold in greatest value; because, in virtue thereof, there will be a like direction to self of the Bible's warnings, and so as to make it good that the security shall not be without but with obedience.

38. But, *fourthly*, however the question might be disposed of, if by faith alone we can be sanctified, let it never be lost sight of that it is by faith, and faith alone, that we are justified. Or rather, it is the righteousness of Christ which justifies us; and this righteousness becomes ours by faith, and by faith only. I cannot adequately express the sense under which I labour of the importance of this proposition—a proposition without our acquiescence in which there can be no solid, no satisfying peace with God. In that mental process through which it is that we are justified, we have not to look inwardly upon ourselves in order to fetch anything thence, by which to contribute even in the smallest degree, or to help out by so much as one shred or one particle our justification in the sight of God. We must look outwardly and objectively to the righteousness of Christ, and fetch thence, not a part only, but out and out the whole of our justification. It is true, that ere this mighty privilege can be ours, we must have a personal qualification, and that qualification is faith. But it is not the faith which makes the justification, it only receives it. It acts but an organic or a receptive part in this process, being the mere organ of transmission through which the righteousness of Christ is admitted into contact with, and becomes the property of the soul. And it is all-important to remark that there is no other personal qualification which has any share in this reception of the righteousness of Christ, and that this office or function of a receiver belongs to faith only. Yet we do not object to a special relation of correspondence between the special benefit received and the special object on which faith rests, and to which it is directed. Believest thou, says the Saviour to the man on whom He was about to confer a miraculous cure—believest thou that I am able to do *this?* and when the man said, Yea, Lord, according to his special faith in this so was done unto him. And there is the same counterpart speciality still between the benefit received and the object believed in. It is through faith in the blood of Christ that Christ becomes our propitiation. It is through faith in the righteousness of Christ which is unto all, that that righteousness

comes *upon* us. It is not our diffused or universal faith in the whole Bible, but our concentrated faith in the righteousness of Christ, that gives us a part and an interest in that righteousness. And let us take our fill of the glorious privilege without the fear of Antinomianism, for there is no inlet afforded to this corruption by keeping our eye open to what the Bible says of the righteousness of Christ, if we do not shut our eye when we turn to the other sayings of the Bible. That is the way of impressing the whole Christianity of the whole Bible upon our hearts. Keep the eye open to the whole of it, and whether it be the influence of comfort or of warning, the object, the special object to which we are looking at the time, will do its own work upon us—so that the same Bible which is profitable for doctrine, will be profitable also for reproof, and for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

39. Whether these considerations be decisive or not of the question—If faith of itself, or the mere act of believing the gospel, viewed as an assent of the intellect to its truth, and nothing more—whether this, in its naked simplicity, without the addition of any other constituent at the outset of conversion, but in virtue of its own operation, be enough to save and to sanctify the soul? However this question might be settled, surely what we have said, if not sufficient to clear up the metaphysics of the question, at least enables us to lay such a message before the people, as they should be at no loss to understand and proceed upon. We do not deny, you will observe, that there must be a consent as well as an assent. The only question—one perhaps of mental philosophy more than of practical usefulness—is, whether the consent forms part of the saving faith, or be only a fruit and consequent thereof; whether it have a primary or a secondary place in the order of those footsteps by which a sinner passes from the alienation of nature to the peace and obedience of the gospel? Now let this be determined as it may, and whether the preceding observations cast any light upon it or not, they at least furnish us with the material of a most distinct and intelligible proposition, and one which might be converted into immense use and application, when we are setting forth to our hearers the overtures of reconciliation which God hath made to the world. Whatever mystery may have been made of the gospel calls, the calls which have been addressed from God to man, there is no such mystery ever dreamed of in the perfectly analogous calls made

by man upon his fellows. Should any willing and generous benefactor among ourselves, actuated by good-will to one and all of the multitude before him, proclaim in their hearing, that whoever came to his person, or to the place which he specified, should receive a certain donation, I am sure there is not one of them who would suffer any mystifications, however subtle and perplexing, so far to darken and pervert his understanding, as that he should not construe this call, flung abroad though it has been over a whole assemblage of people, into a special promise and invitation directed to himself; and it positively requires no more than his faith in the truthfulness of the proposal, to engender his trust and his confident expectation that all its benefits would be realized upon him. It is true that along with the promise there was a bidding—the promise of what he should get, and the bidding that he should come for it; but this distinction between one part of the call and another, however scholastically it might be stated, and however scholastically it might be discussed, brings no practical difficulty along with it to the hearer of the call, who simply does the bidding, and looks for the fulfilment of the promise. And it is precisely so with God's call to the world, "Whosoever cometh shall not be cast out;" or, in other language, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto God, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon him." There is here too a promise and a bidding; and the purpose of your message to every congregation is, that they shall trust the promise, and do the bidding: "Trust in the Lord, and be doing good." It is true that there must be a consent as well as an assent; but, postponing for the present the question whether the assent will or will not of itself insure the consent, there is nothing surely in this or in any other question which should in the least obscure or embarrass the practical operation of the gospel call on the man who listens to it with a plain and ordinary understanding. Say that you first proclaim in his hearing a call on him to believe the gospel of salvation, or which is the same thing, the good news of salvation. This were no good news to him were it but the salvation of others that you were announcing. To make it good news for him it must be a message of salvation for himself that you are bringing to his door; or, in other words, you must make him, what I feel quite sure you are fully authorized to do, the tender of his own salvation. Every

preacher of the gospel is a bearer of glad tidings of great joy unto all people—to him, therefore, as one of the people; and they can only be glad tidings to him, because the tidings of his own offered pardon, of his own promised recovery from the evils of sin, and reconciliation with God. But the message does not stop here. There is in it a command as well as an offer; and the whole substance of it is fitly represented by the first recorded announcement of our Saviour in the evangelist Mark—Repent, and believe the gospel; or, Repent, and believe the good news. Be assured that he who with a true faith takes the good news to himself, charges himself with the repentance also. He treats alike the promises of what he is to get, and the bidding of what he has to do. He lays both upon himself, and from the very commencement of his Christianity, do we see him at once the hopeful and the laborious disciple—joyfully trusting in the promise that has been made to him, diligently working at the task which has been prescribed to him. There must surely have a sad mist arisen out of our theological warfare, which could have at all obscured or distorted a matter so plain. In the case of illustration which we have just given, the man who was told, although through the medium of a general call addressed to a whole multitude, to come to a certain place and receive a certain benefit, he would be at no loss how to proceed, that he might realize to himself what had been thus held out to him. He would simply believe as he was told, and do as he was bidden. There would be no disjunction of these two things. They behoved to stand or to fall together. If he believed that he was to get the thing promised, he must also have believed that he behoved to go for it. On the other hand, there would be no hope if there was no obedience. He would look for no fulfilment if conscious to himself that he did not mean to move a single footstep towards it. With the expectation of the offered boon, there behoved to be the consciousness of a purpose to enter on the prescribed walk. His first very footstep would indicate the reality of the expectation—an expectation that would brighten with every succeeding footstep, and in proportion as he got nearer and nearer to the time and place of that accomplishment, which both stirred up his hopes and set him agoing in order to realize them. And it is precisely so with the walk and the work of Christianity. The man who truly believed on its announced promises would also enter on its bidden path. If there be no consciousness of a purpose to repent, there will be no confidence

in the offered salvation. The ransom of his soul is fully held out to him for his acceptance, but the way he is told, by which the ransomed of the Lord pass over to heaven, is a way of holiness. If there be no purpose to enter on that way, no progress made or making on it, there can be no well-grounded hope; on the other hand, with the first dawnings of a hope that is at all genuine, there will be a dawning purpose of reformation, and the consciousness thereof. The first moment of the new obedience will be at once the indication and the effect of his newly-formed faith—a faith that will strengthen with every advancement that is made on the narrow way which leadeth unto life. There may be a difficulty in following out the argumentations, and apprehending all the distinctions of a learned or metaphysic theology; but with the simple reader of his Bible, who with the docility of a little child receives the informations which it gives, and betakes himself to the course which it prescribes, there is no difficulty. To him who orders his conversation aright, God will show his salvation, and the wayfaring man who runs may read with understanding, would he simply believe as he is told, and do as he is bidden.

40. Let me not leave off this argument without an earnest recommendation of Bible preaching. Let not the textual character of your discourses be impaired or encroached upon by the distinctions of an artificial theology. Let the Bible lay its impress on every sermon. It will be difficult to avoid the distortion or disfiguration of the true Scripture model, if you bear too great a respect for men, or give in too much to the conceptions and the views of human authorship. Call no man master but Christ; and then it will be your uttermost study to deliver the precepts and promises of the gospel, just as Christ and His apostles delivered them. You will find that the faith and obedience of the gospel—faith in its promises, and obedience to its precepts —work most admirably to each other's hands. It is thus that the Divine word, which hath come down to us from on high, will meet with its duplicates and its confirmations in the human experience that is verified in the hearts and among the habitations of men. There will be a growing and a gathering brightness in the path of every honest believer; and he will feel more and more of a present, a living interest, in the declarations of Scripture, when the word which speaketh to him from heaven obtains its fulfilment upon earth, in the realization of his own moral and spiritual history. Amid the reelings of Church con-

troversy, faith and works have been confronted in hostile array to each other. The more that Bible Christianity prevails over sectarian Christianity, the more will these two elements be found to act and react most beneficially for the mutual help and advancement of both.

41. But admitting the importance of these views, and perhaps that they are enough for the practical guidance both of ministers and people, is it not desirable that even the metaphysics of our question should be seen into, as far as they can be legitimately carried? In order that faith should put man on the right way, or urge him along it, must there not be consent as well as assent—and not the one as a posterior derivative from the other, but both coeval with the very outset of the new course, and both in conjunct and contemporaneous operation at the very entry thereupon? Is it not conceivable that Abraham might have believed the call from heaven, and yet that from the strength of his earthly attachment he could not quit his hold, and so clung to the home and country of his fathers; and to overcome this must there not have been a consent as well as an assent? For though with the intellect alone he might have apprehended the truth of the promise that was made to him, would the faith of mere intellect have led him to go where he was bidden? Or as a still more convincing illustration, could not Abraham have perfectly recognised the voice of God in the call to offer up Isaac; but is it not quite conceivable that, however entire this belief might have been, natural affection might have prevailed, and the obedience not been rendered—seeing that here, too, the faith of mere assent would not have sufficed, but the consent also behoved to be given: and thus it is contended that there must be a right disposition as well as a right belief, or that the consent and concurrence of the will must go along with the view of the understanding. And thus, too, it is reasoned and concluded in regard to the saving faith of the gospel. The plain faith of the intellect alone might suffice, it is alleged, for our reliance on the promises; but that something more is required for our compliance with the precepts, and more especially with the initial and all-comprehending precept of "repent," which is brought to our hearing, just as soon as the call of, Believe the gospel, is brought to our hearing. And thus, too, in this example, the one which most nearly concerns ourselves, it is conceived that there might be an assent without a consent; or, in other words, that the faith of a bare assent would not avail, but that consent must be

superadded, in order so make up a faith which will sanctify and save us. This argument seems to obtain great countenance from the mental state of whole multitudes, perhaps the majority of every Christian land, who have a sort of general faith in the Bible, and yet most assuredly are not walking in that heavenward path which the Bible points out as the only road to a blissful eternity: and hence it is most plausibly asked, whether there must not be a choice or consent by the will, as well as an assent by the understanding, ere the faith that we profess can be regarded as the faith of a true and living Christianity?

42. We reply to this that there must be a consent as well as assent. There is no question as to the necessity of a consent. The question is, whether, according to the order of the human faculties—which order we do not conceive to be changed or violated by the Spirit's operation—whether the assent, if it be real, will not draw the consent after it? The question is not as to the absolute necessity of there being a consent or a choice, on the part of him who at conversion passes from death unto life. The only question for solution regards the place which this consent occupies in the mental process which the believer undergoes —whether as a primary ingredient, or as the sure and immediate effect of that faith which is unto salvation? For we greatly doubt, if the assent do not beget the consent, whether it be a real assent or real faith at all; for there is a semblance of faith without its reality. There are thousands of propositions to which the mind might give its listless acquiescence, while taking no pains either to verify or to contradict them. But we should not call such an acquiescence as this, faith; and yet such may be the whole amount of that seeming faith in the doctrines of Christianity which brings no willingness for the services of Christianity along with it. It follows not that the mind gives actual or positive credit to the propositions set before it, merely because it does not or dares not contradict them, or because it feels no opposition to them; nay, though even at the telling of another—be it the telling of a man or of a book, of the minister or of the Bible—though at this telling he has formally adopted these propositions as his own, and avers them to be the articles of his creed. There are many, very many, so-called beliefs in the human mind, of which we are persuaded that if subjected to some decisive test of their reality, they would turn out to be no beliefs at all. We remember long ago, when reading the works of Dr. Adam Smith, being much interested by a curious frag-

ment of his on the evidence for the truth of the Copernican system, and the effect of that evidence on the mind of the inquirer. It is worthy of your perusal, were it but for the illustration of our present subject. This little effusion is a good deal characterized by the philosophical scepticism of the age—a scepticism carried to its utmost height by his intimate friend and associate, David Hume—and wherewith, it is to be feared, that his own mind was perniciously infected. Still, there is some truth in what he says, or rather in what is implied by the views set forth in his essay,—that a student might but fancy himself a convert to the modern astronomy, while, after all, instead of belief, it might be the mere repose of the imagination, regaled and satisfied with the harmonious spectacle of phenomena and principles brought into good and well-looking adjustment with each other. I shrewdly suspect that there are many of our scientific, and many of our historical beliefs which amount to no more than this; and I am not sure, however general the profession of belief in them might be, if so much as one could be found who would stake life and fortune, or even greatly lesser interests, on the truth of the Copernican system, or the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar. There are states of mind in relation to certain doctrines or propositions—not only where there is no denial of them, no dissent from them, nay, a preference or inclination toward them rather than their opposites—and yet all this short of settled or absolute conviction in their truth. And such we hold to be the mental state, in reference to the truths of Christianity, of a vast number—nay, we fear, of the vast majority of those called Christians. They give their assent to mere verbal propositions, and nothing more. They yield a sort of assent to them; but it is an assent to them in word only, not in reality, and therefore not in power. They go along with the words, without almost the conception, and certainly without any realizing sense of their archetypes. They would shudder at infidelity, and therefore do not resist any of the great and acknowledged doctrines of the faith; but truly one may not resist, and yet in good earnest may he as little realize them. He may repeat, and without the slightest tendency to question or contradict them, all the sentences both of his creed and catechism, so as to have got them by heart, and yet without any such sense or perception of their reality as that he should lay them to heart. In which case we should say that he does not believe them, and that it is not merely his heart which is in fault, but his understanding is

in fault. We are inclined in the state now described, to dispute, not merely the strength of his faith, but the existence of it. Certain it is that the Scripture would not own it to be faith, or at least most distinctly and decisively affirms that if it do not tell upon the heart, if it do not work by love, if it do not lead to the walk of a new obedience—then it is not the faith which availeth. We are doubtful, very doubtful, if it be faith at all; and there is one thing at least undeniable, that it is not the faith which is unto salvation—for if such, it would have its fruit unto holiness, and in the end life everlasting. But though we should not labour any farther to determine the nice metaphysical question, whether it be faith at all, or faith in its most embryo and rudimental form—whether it be not the mere shadowy resemblance of faith, with nought of its substance or reality—though we should not prosecute this question, suspecting that it would land us in a mere logomachy, or war of definitions, there is one observation which should not be omitted, because of capital importance, as eminently subservient to the practical guidance both of ministers for the right conduct of their pulpit instructions, and of private Christians for the right culture and advancement of their own personal religion. It is an observation to which both Scripture and experience lend their concurring testimony, and that is, the mighty importance of a right understanding and right views of truth to a right direction of the affections, and the will, and all the active powers or faculties of our nature. In accordance with this, you will find that the initial exercises of the mind, in order to a change from the bad to the good, whether in character or conduct, are so many intellectual acts or exercises —and this with the view, either to discern truth aright, or to keep that truth steadily in the presence of the mind. One of these exercises is giving or taking heed: "How shall a young man cleanse his way?"—by taking heed unto the Word. "We ought to give earnest heed unto the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." In like manner, what more frequent injunction, and for the purpose too, of recalling us to the paths of wisdom and righteousness, and keeping us therein, than that we should *consider* certain truths, or charge our minds both with their meaning and with their big and important reality: "Know, therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath, there is none else."—"O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their

latter end."—"Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how good things he hath done for you."—"When I consider, I am afraid of him."—"Stand still, and consider the fearful works of God."—"Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."—"I will consider thy testimonies."—"Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."—"They regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands."—"That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it." Mark here the intellectual signification of all these words—the seeing, and the knowing, and the considering, and the understanding—all spoken of as the primary and preparative steps to a right state of the affections, or a right habit and character of obedience towards God. But to pursue still further these important quotations: "It may be they will consider, though they be a rebellious house."—"They consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness."—"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."—"Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."—"Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." We could produce many similar quotations of words that bear the like intellectual meaning with those that have been already instanced—such as regarding, and remembering, and attending, and hearkening, which, in their nature, are so many acts and exercises of the understanding, and have for their objects the truths which God sets before us; and which acts or exercises we are enjoined to perform on very purpose that the truths may be rightly apprehended, and in virtue of their being so, have a right influence on our hearts and our lives. There is much to be learned from these passages of Scripture. They demonstrate what observation indeed abundantly tells—the primary and presiding influence of truth over the affections and the will. But truth were a mere nonentity in point of effect, unless it were truth believed, truth understood, truth attended to; and when called on, as in the extracts now given, to take heed, and to consider, and to attend—these can be regarded in no other light than as so many testimonies to the moralizing and sanctifying power of faith; for the whole purpose of these prescribed mental exercises is, that we should obtain through means of them a realizing sense of the objects presented for our contemplation.

43. I am unwilling to quit the subject without some such deliverance as might let you know how far the lights of Scripture and the mental philosophy have carried forward my own views on the question at issue. There is such a thing as being carried forward a certain way among the difficulties of an inquiry without being carried over them. Still it is good, though we should not be able to reach the end of the question, or as we may say, to consummate the solution of it—it is good if we can define to what extent we can confidently go in it. Next to a determinate and full solution of the question, it is of importance, failing the possibility of this, to assign the limit of our discoveries thereupon, and so to trace, as it were, the marches of separation between the certainties and the uncertainties which belong to it.

44. First, then, there can be no doubt, and with the exception of avowed Antinomians, I should imagine that there is a general agreement on this matter—there can be no doubt that over and above the assent of the understanding to the truths of the gospel, there must be the consent of the will to come under the practical discipleship of its lessons and its laws, and that without this there can be no salvation. The question is, Whether there be not virtue enough in the assent, if it be real, to produce the consent, so as that the assent might be all in all of saving faith, and the consent, however indispensable, might still, instead of a constituent part of this, be only the effect or consequent thereof? Certain it is, that faith, even when spoken of singly in Scripture, is often said of itself to save us. Salvation is of faith: we are saved by faith; "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved;" "whosoever believeth in me shall not perish, but have everlasting life." But then other things beside faith are stated to be essential to salvation—holiness is, the new obedience of the gospel is—and so therefore must the consent on our part that we shall render that obedience. Yet it follows not that this, or any of the other requisites to salvation besides itself, should be part of this faith, or enter into the primary composition of it. Enough to secure for faith the power and the property ascribed to it in the Bible of its sufficiency to save us, if these other and indispensable requisites for our salvation shall be not the parts but the necessary product of faith, the necessary results of its operation on the heart and practice, or on the active powers and the emotional sensibilities of our nature. Enough to reserve for faith all the fulness of its saving efficacy, if these, though not

its ingredients, are the fruits of faith, which might therefore in itself be still belief, and nothing more.

45. But here lies the difficulty. There is often a belief, or something at least as like it as possible, and on matters, too, which to ourselves are of the greatest practical and personal concernment, and yet which terminates in no corresponding practical result. The instance that weighs most with me is the universal belief which all men have in the certainty of death, which no one will deny to have existence at least in every mind, whether it have influence and operation there or not. Now it is the existence without the operation which is the staggering fact, and however we may be able to dispose of it, the phenomenon of an existent faith, and yet not an operative faith, must have an important bearing on this controversy. It is quite palpable of every man that he will tell you he believes in death, and yet how few live as if they were to die, nay, how palpable it is of the great majority of our race, when you look at their plans and their calculations and their busy pursuits and interests, and, in short, to the whole set and habit of their mind, that believing though they do in the death which at the end of a few little years is sure to overtake them, yet still they live here as if here they were to live for ever. Now you would scarcely call this faith in the minds of all men that they are to die, you would scarcely call it but a seeming faith, or faith in semblance only, not faith in reality. You must call it an inoperative faith, but you would hardly say of it that it was no faith at all. Here, then, to all appearance, there is a faith which leads to nothing practical, and if so in one article of belief, why may it not be so in other or in all the articles of belief? My own partialities would have led me to regard even this faith in death as but a seeming and not an actual faith, so long as it remained inoperative, or up to the point at which it began to tell on the heart and the history of men; or, in other words, that it became a real only when it began to be an operative faith. I fear, however, that I must concede to the generally received phraseology on this subject, which characterizes the faith that is without works not as no faith at all, which does not refuse it a reality and a being, but which calls it a dead faith, an inoperative faith.

46. I shall not quarrel about names and definitions; but let us look to the actual phenomena, and on the contemplation of these, if I am not mistaken, we shall not fail to recognise the paramount importance of faith in religion, so in fact as to secure

for it all the might and ascendency of a great overruling principle, which we need practically to care for. And to manifest the great practical power of this said faith, let me ask what is the object or meaning of all these directions which we have now been quoting, to take heed, to consider, to attend, to remember and dwell upon this one and that other truth? why, the object, the design of all these admonitions, is to keep the truth present to the mind, to keep the truth within view of the mind, to keep the truth close upon the mind, to keep it in contact with the mind. The good old Puritanic authors, among their other prescribed exercises, often tell us to act faith on this one and that other verse in the Bible. Now this acting of faith upon any Bible intimation, is just to think well how true it is, to charge your mind with the trueness of it, and this in order that the felt trueness might tell appropriately on the heart and conduct. Take as an illustration of what we labour to impress on you, the saying of the Apostle, That we love Him because He first loved us. The affection, the thing of highest moral worth, being in fact the first and greatest of the commandments, is here represented as the effect of a something anterior, the love, namely, of our gratitude to God, as the effect of God's love of kindness towards us. But in order that this first love, the love of God to us, should awaken the second love, the love of man to God, we must have faith in it, for in point of influence it were a nonentity if it were not believed; but what is more, it is a nonentity for the time, at least so long as it is not thought upon. That this our love to God be awakened in the heart, and kept up in the heart, it is not enough that God's love to us be believed in, it must also be thought upon. So long as the thought is not in the mind, so long is the affection corresponding to the thought not in the heart. If the mind be otherwise employed than in thinking of God's love of good-will to us, the heart for the time is otherwise occupied than with our love of gratitude to God back again. But surely you cannot ascribe this latter phenomenon to any want of power in faith, seeing that the absence of love from one heart at any given time is due not to the powerlessness of the faith, but to the absence of the faith. We cannot charge it on the moral impotency of faith that there should be no love felt, so long as faith is not present and not in exercise. Nay, it speaks all the more emphatically for the power of faith, when told that the love is not there, just because the faith is not there; and that the way to relume the love is just to recall the faith, which is done

by our taking heed, by our attending, by our considering, by our bringing to remembrance—all of them the expressions of an intellectual act, and the object of all being to bring God's love to us within the perception and view of the understanding. And surely, if the love being suspended when faith is suspended, form no reason, but the contrary, for questioning the power of faith, it forms as little reason for questioning its simplicity as being belief and nothing more. It says nothing for faith being a composition of two ingredients, such as belief and love, or such as assent and consent, to tell us that many a man who calls himself a believer, and has all the appearance of being so, spends hours and days together without being visited by the love of God, nay, that the general habit of his heart is so as to be devoid of this affection; we ask if all the while that this love to God is away from him, the belief of God's love to him is not also away from him? Is the thought of God's love to him ever present to his mind at the time when he labours under this utter desolation in the heart of all love to God, and this thought not in the form of a vivid conception, but in the form of a felt and confident reality? We are persuaded that whenever the simple, if real belief, that God loves me, is occupying my mind, love to Him back again will occupy my heart. Were the faith perennial, the love would be perennial—did I realize God's reconciled countenance all the day long, love for Him all the day long would arise like the incense of a perpetual offering—did I believe and keep in memory, for without this memory, says the Apostle, faith is vain, and would be of no efficacy—did I believe and keep in memory the truth that Christ died for my sins, according to the Scriptures, the unfailing consequence would be, that I should keep my heart in the love of God, and just according to the language of the Apostle Jude, be building myself up in our most holy faith. And going back to Paul, did I live a life of faith on the Son of God, then would it be a life of love; and as this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, the life which I lived in the flesh, just because a life of faith on the Son of God, would be a life of obedience. It argues nothing against either the power or the simplicity of faith, that there is no love in the heart at those times when it might be said that faith is not in being; for when the thing believed is not present to the mind, faith in that thing is not in act and operation. Enough if every time that the faith is exercised the love is excited; and without mystifying our speculation by making a perfect jumble of the human faculties

and their respective functions, we understand, when we speak of faith and love, that faith is faith itself and nothing more, and that love is not a part but a consequent, an effect of faith, and not one of its primary ingredients, the consent of the affections, the fruit of that assent which is yielded by the understanding to such truths as are the objects of its believing contemplation.

47. With the help of these observations, we are the better able to dispose of the phenomenon that death should be so universally believed in, and yet should be so little operative. It can only be operative when in operation, and by the very nature of the thing, can only be in operation when the thought of it is present to the mind. If it do not tell upon us through life, it is because the urgencies of sense, which beset us all life long, dislodge the idea of it. Amid the songs of festivity, and the busy pursuits of the world, the mind can easily make escape from the unwelcome intrusion of such a thought; nay, such is the corrupt and carnal tendency to be monopolized over by things seen and things sensible, that it would require a strenuous effort to detain the thought within the precincts of memory or recollection, and there to dwell upon it at all times. Be assured that it arises neither from a want of power nor from a want of simplicity, as if the belief of it were anything more than a conviction of its trueness, that it produces so little or no effect on the heart and conduct. Were it in view of the mind, it would tell on the feelings and purposes of the mind, and if it fail of this, it is not because of its want of fitness to sober and solemnize the heart, but because it is forgotten; and even when taken cognizance of, seen so faintly, or through a transparency so dim, as to be well-nigh veiled altogether from observation. Let it but haunt us at all times with a sense of its impending reality, of its agonies and horrors, of the judgment that follows it, and the unprovided eternity to which it is the portal, and we should soon perceive that really it requires nothing but to see it as it is, nothing but a right understanding and belief of it, to form an adequate motive by which to impress the heart of a rightly constituted man, whose heart of stone had been taken out of him, and to whom a heart of flesh had been given in its place. There must, we admit, be an impressible subject, but the moving force to operate on this subject lies in the understanding; and so the Bible makes use of terms altogether intellectual when addressing itself to the object of recalling man from sin to seriousness. "O that they were wise, that they understood these things, that they considered their

latter end;" and, "O that they, too, had so numbered (an intellectual operation this, too, surely) their days as to apply their hearts to wisdom." It argues nothing against, but all for the fitness of the principle to work any given effect, that when not present and not in operation, there is no such effect as we are contending for. It just tells us all the more forcibly, that this is the principle, and that nothing else is competent for the production of the effect in question. Or that regeneration is indispensable, in order that man become an impressible subject, this does not hinder but that it is truth rightly apprehended, and truth alone, which makes the impression. A man may have to undergo a renovation, and have spiritually to be made all over again, ere he becomes a fit subject for sanctification; and yet faith, faith in its simplicity, faith as consisting of belief and nothing else, may be the sanctifying, and the only sanctifying power, that which overcometh the world, and to which and by which all things are possible.

48. On this question, I have sometimes alleged the case of Peter calling out in terror when walking on the sea, when he was rescued by the Saviour, and at the same time rebuked by Him in these terms: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" People might say on this instance, was not courage requisite here as well as faith? Our reply is, that it was because of the faith being wanting, that the courage was wanting. The faith, had it been strong enough, would have upheld and alimented the courage. Our Saviour puts the failure of his courage on its right footing, when He ascribes it to the failure of his faith, which gave way amid the turmoil of conflicting waves and rushing waters. Had the faith been strong enough for the occasion, the courage would have been strong enough, not as an ingredient of the faith, but in the order of cause and effect, as a consequent of the faith. The understanding dealing rightly with the truth would have sufficed to carry Peter triumphantly through the perils of his situation, even though he acted wrong by precipitating himself into it, thus tempting the Lord his God. But notwithstanding, had he, even after the mistake was committed, but trusted in the Lord, judged the Lord to be able and faithful, as Abraham and Sarah did in the face of the unlikelihoods which tried them, charged himself with the trueness of this proposition, that such was the power and such the tenderness of Christ for him, that He would never let him perish; according to this his faith, a purely intellectual act,

as I apprehend it to have been, both his fears would have been repressed and his deliverance been alike sure.

49. Let me now sum up my leading views on a subject which has detained me longer than I anticipated.

First, We hold that saving faith is belief, and nothing more; and that whatever else is indispensable to salvation, call it repentance, or holiness, or the love of God, or the new obedience of the gospel, or the consent of the will to its bidding, is distinguished from the assent of the understanding to its truths, that it forms no part of this faith, but is only the fruit of it.

Secondly, We hold that the gospel makes a tender of salvation to all men, and that to believe in it requires but an intelligent faith in these sayings of Scripture which relate to the subject. It is thus that every reader of the Bible has a warrant for believing that there is in it the message of an offered salvation to himself, and this without the help of any other consciousness than simply that he is a man. The devils, wanting this consciousness, believe and tremble. A man having it, may believe and trust that God is holding out for acceptance the salvation of the gospel to himself individually.

Thirdly, The proposition that the gospel makes a tender of—salvation to all men, and therefore to me in particular, is distinct from the proposition that I am one of the saved; a belief in the former proposition required a certain degree of consciousness, even the consciousness that I am a man—a belief in the latter requires a further degree of consciousness, the consciousness that I am a returning man, a repentant man, a man who not only assents to the truth of all which the Bible says, but consents and is resolved on the strength of divine grace to be all which the Bible requires of him. The consciousness of such being his purpose, might awaken the hope of salvation for himself even on his first acceptance of the gospel. The experience of growing success in the fulfilment of our purpose might brighten and confirm this hope more and more even to the degree of a full assurance of salvation.

Fourthly, Although such a consent as we have just described be essential to my salvation, there is confusion of thought, or at least of language, on the part of those who tell us that this consent forms any part or ingredient of the faith that I am one of the saved, or that this faith is aught else or aught more than an act of the understanding. The fact of my consent forms part of the evidence on which I believe myself to be one of the saved,

but it forms no part of the belief itself, and they who affirm so, confound the reasons of faith with the act of faith.

Fifthly, There is no danger in appropriating to one's-self those invitations and promises in the gospel which are addressed to all men, if we make a like honest and consistent application to ourselves of those warnings and precepts in the gospel which are addressed to all men. Such appropriation, so far from leading to Antinomianism, forms a security against it, nay, raises the barrier of its moral impossibility in the way of every man who places a whole faith in a whole Bible.

Sixthly, Whatever difficulty there may be in determining the question, whether that seeming faith, which yields not the fruits of practical righteousness, be a real faith or not, certain it is that it is not a saving faith. It may be as difficult metaphysically to discriminate between an operative and inoperative faith, or to lay one's finger on the point that divides them, as it is to explore the arcana of a man's spirit, and thence to determine the question, whether he is or is not a believer. But whatever difficulty attaches to either of these inquiries, there can be no difficulty in assigning the Scripture test—whether of the faith being a saving faith, or of the believer being a believer unto salvation—even that by their fruits ye shall known them.

Seventhly, There is nothing in this admission to infringe either on the supremacy of faith as the sole principle of the new obedience of the gospel, or on its simplicity as consisting of belief, and nothing more. It were a vain thing to look for faith being operative when it is not faith in exercise; and if that faith be in exercise, the truths which are its objects must be present to the mind. Hence the frequent calls in Scripture to think, and to hearken, and to take heed, and to consider, and to recall, and to keep in memory—all intellectual acts, and all for the purpose of keeping faith, itself an exclusively intellectual act, in busy and habitual operation. So entirely is this the principle of our new obedience, that a course of such obedience is called a walk of faith in contradistinction to a walk of sight; and the great specific of the apostle Jude for keeping our hearts in the love of God, is to build ourselves up on our most holy faith.

Eighthly, The prosecution of this inquiry will open up additional and confirmatory views of the Scripture doctrine of regeneration. Some—misapplying the principle, that had we only

faith, all would follow—conceive that if the objective light of Scripture were made sufficiently clear *ab extra*, this of itself would suffice for the virtues of the new creature in Jesus Christ. But ere this can be effected, there must be a subjective and inward operation upon the mind; so that man has not only to be visited by light from without, but must be gifted with the seeing eye, or the power of spiritual discernment, from within; and accordingly the Scripture says, "That he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ."

Ninthly, But more than this, the internal operation of God's Spirit in the work of regeneration is not confined to the understanding of him on whom He operates. He must not only be made capable of knowing and discerning aright, but made capable of feeling aright in the contemplation of what he does know; thus superadding to a true perception by the understanding the susceptibility of a true and right impression in the heart. And accordingly, God is said to make a willing people, to take the heart of stone out of them, to give them a heart of flesh, from which, and many other places, it is abundantly obvious that in conversion there takes place, not a partial, but a total regeneration, the fall having deteriorated each faculty, and dislocated the connexion between them.

Tenthly, But though our moral mechanism be thus renovated, all its parts and faculties stand in a given relation to each other. The understanding, and the heart, and the active powers of human nature, maintain each their appropriate and distinct functions, and exert on each other their appropriate influences as before. Faith, from the central place it occupies in the mental system, takes the direction and exerts the supremacy over the whole man, so that we are saved by faith, and sanctified by faith.

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